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*TIN TACKS.*

FOR . . . .

*TINY FOLKS*

and other

OUTLINE . .

ADDRESSES.

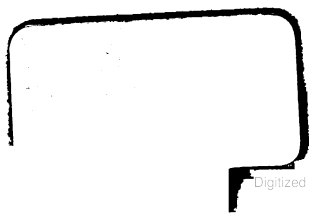
By

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*Winchester.*



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# TIN TACKS FOR

TINY FOLKS;  
AND OTHER

OUTLINE  
ADDRESSES.

FOR PREACHERS, TEACHERS,  
AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS  
AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY CHARLES EDWARDS.

*THE SOLDIERS HOME, WINCHESTER,  
AUTHOR OF "A BOX OF NAILS."*

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## Introduction.

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"Tin-Tacks for Tiny Folks, and other Outline Addresses," is intended to be a special help to Sunday School Teachers and devoted Christian workers amongst our young people. All spiritually-minded labourers and Bible-loving teachers are thankful for suggestive thoughts, arranged points, and simple helps in their busy service for the Master, and we feel sure this little book, with its variety of subjects and nicely arranged index, will prove a real friend to many such workers.

The very best way to teach the young is to bring them under the direct influence of the Word of God. Nothing so effectually interests the mind, touches the conscience, and impresses the heart, as this mighty instrument of spiritual power, and the best help for this service is not the long, formal, cut and dried, worked-out lesson, nor lengthened elaborate address, but short, sharp, crisp, pointed, suggested thoughts, arranged in such a way that the teacher or speaker may easily remember them, and fill in and enforce in his own way.

B



A few bright Nails of truth, Pins of thought, Pivots of illustration, and small Tin-Tacks for the Tiny Folks, are worth far more, practically, to busy workers than all the enlarged addresses in the world.

These pointed portions will quicken and refresh the teacher, interest and instruct the children, and convey a few short, simple, definite thoughts of truth, which will be fixed and abide for a lasting blessing without overcrowding the minds of either the Teachers or the Young Folks.

The Bird Lessons for the Bairns have appeared, one each month, in "The Bugle Call" through 1897, and are presented in this permanent form by special request, from numbers of Mission Workers and Sunday School Teachers all over the country, who have valued and used them.

The interesting group of our feathered friends, teaches and suggests to us many lessons of faith, love, and service, and supplies a nice series of helpful subjects for the Home Circle, Sunday School, or the Church. These little wonders on wing are so many object lessons of trust, energy, joy, and praise, and by getting our young friends to observe their habits and lives, they may be stimulated to industry, activity, and hope.



We have noted the Trust of the Sparrow, the Friendship of the Robin, the Usefulness of the Raven, the Vigour of the Thrush, the Selfishness of the Cuckoo, the Mission of the Swallow, the Song of the Nightingale, the Thanksgiving of the Skylark, the Fear of the Partridge, the Service of the Blackbird, the Gentleness of the Dove, and the Strength of the Eagle ; all illustrating some special feature of grace, strength, and activity of the Christian life.

Our one desire is to serve the Master in assisting His busy workers. If this is the result of putting this book through the press, the author will rejoice, and to God be all the glory.

C. EDWARDS.



## Tin Tacks as Precepts for a Holy Life.

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- T "Take heed what you hear." *Mark* iv. 24.  
I "Incline your ears to the words of my mouth."  
    *Ps.* lxxviii. 1.  
N "Never forget *His* precepts." *Ps.* cxix. 93.  
T "Take fast hold of instruction." *Prov.* iv. 13.  
A "Ask for the old paths." *Jer.* vi. 16.  
C "Choose right companions." *Ps.* cxix. 63.  
K "Knock and it shall be opened." *Matt.* vii. 7.  
S "Seek and ye shall find." *Matt.* vii. 7.  
F "Follow that which is good." *1 Thess.* v. 15.  
O "Obey God rather than man." *Acts* v. 29.  
R "Remember now thy Creator." *Eccl.* xii. 1.  
T "Taste and see that the Lord is good."  
    *Ps.* xxxiv. 8.  
I "Incline your heart unto the Lord." *Josh.*  
    xxiv. 23.  
N "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." *1 Tim.*  
    iv. 14.  
Y "Yield yourselves unto God." *Rom.* vi. 13.  
F "Fight the good fight of faith." *1 Tim.* vi. 12.  
O "Occupy till I come." *Luke* xix. 13.  
L "Looking unto Jesus." *Heb.* xii. 2.  
K "Keep yourselves from idols." *1 John* v. 21.  
S "Singing with grace in your hearts." *Col.* iii. 16.



## Action.

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It is a true saying, "Actions speak louder than words," and let us remember that "By the Lord, Actions are weighed" (1 *Sam.* ii. 3). There is a machine in the Bank of England which receives sovereigns as a mill receives grain, for the purpose of determining wholesale whether they are of full weight. As they pass through, the machinery, by unerring laws, throws all that are light to one side, and all that are of full weight to another, and there are no mistakes. So the Lord weighs our lives, and there is no mistake. How careful we should be to act right. What must we do? Listen—

**A** Ask the Lord's mind. *Prov.* iii. 6.

**C** Consult the Guide Book. *Is.* xxxiv. 16; *Ps.* lxxiii. 24.

**T** Tread in the right path. *Jer.* vi. 16.

**I** Idleness and sin avoid. *Eccl.* x. 18.

**O** Offer your gifts to God. *Rom.* xii. 1; *Heb.* xiii. 15.

**N** Never forget His love. *Ps.* ciii. 2.

"Don't write there," said a father to his son, who was writing with a diamond on the window. "Why not?" "Because you can't rub it out."

Try to be a living energy, and not a dead weight in the spiritual world; to be a sunbeam,



and not a murky cloud; to be an electric spark kindling fire in others' hearts, and not a wet blanket, putting out and smothering the smoking flax.

### **Almond Buds and Blessings.**

The Bible abounds with symbols and similes of spiritual things; they are presented to us in type, parable, and story, and our lives are crowded and surrounded with object lessons of grace, that our hearts may be continually impressed with the presence and power of God. The Holy Spirit has lifted almost everything in nature into the sphere of sacred service for the Master, which calls us to earnest *life, obedience, walk, and testimony*, in the great field of opportunity and promise. The Almond Tree with its Buds, Flowers, and Fruits, is perhaps one of the most striking of these spiritual emblems of life in its different aspects.

1. **The Almond Tree.** An emblem of passing life.  
*Nature.* Eccles. xii. 5; James iv. 14.
2. **The Almond Rod.** Type of Resurrection life.  
*Grace.* Num. xvii. 8; John xii. 24.
3. **The Almond Flower.** Mark of Spiritual life.  
*Testimony.* Ex xxv. 33; Phil. ii. 15, 16.
4. **The Almond Fruit.** Token of useful life.  
*Service.* Gen. xliii. 11; 2 Cor. ix. 8.
5. **The Almond Branch.** Picture of doomed life,  
*Warning.* Jer. i. 11; Acts xiii. 40, 41.



It is interesting to notice the many features of life illustrated by the Almond Tree. *Natural life*, fainting and failing, yet flourishing. *Resurrection life*, budding, blooming, and bearing fruit. *Spiritual life*, manifested in brightness, beauty, and blessing. *Useful life*, in gifts, gratitude, and grace; and *Doomed life*, in witnessing, warning, and woe.

The Hebrew name of the Almond Tree, they tell us, is derived from "*Shakad*," which means "to watch;" and signifies that it keeps its station, being the first that blooms in the Spring, and the last that fades in Harvest, or a waking rod, and just as the tree makes haste to bud and bloom, so the world is speedily ripening either for death or glory. The judgment of God is hastening on upon the unbelieving world, as it did upon Israel. How wise for all to accept eternal life in Christ, and prepare for the speedy coming of the Lord.

### **Anchors for every Vessel.**

Life is a voyage from the scenes of Time to the shores of Eternity, and its varied experiences are as changeable and restless as the ocean; and what the anchor is to the ship, so is *hope* to the soul, its salvation, support, and security. The anchor to the ship is an unseen friend fixed on the ground, fastened to the cable, in order to stay the vessel in the time of storm. So a good hope through grace to every believer is a friend,



a stay, a power and a joy. "Which hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and steadfast" *Heb.* vi. 19.

1. **The Anchor saves the ship in times of danger; Salvation.** *Heb.* vi. 18.

So does hope save our souls.

2. **The Anchor steadies the ship in times of storm; Steadfastness.** *Heb.* vi. 19; *Rom.* v. 4.

So does hope steady our hearts.

3. **The Anchor sustains the ship in times of trouble; Strength.** *Acts* xxvii. 29; *1 Peter* i. 3, 21.

So does hope sustain our lives.

4. **The Anchor stays the ship in times of difficulty; Stability.** *1 Thess.* i. 3; *Heb.* vi. 11; iii. 14.

So does hope stay our peace.

5. **The Anchor secures the ship in times of fear; Security.** *1 John* iii. 3; *Rom.* viii. 24; *Col.* i. 3.

So does hope secure our minds.

Hope is the twin sister of Faith (*1 Cor.* xiii. 13), the pilgrim's staff (*Heb.* xi. 13, 14), the anchor of the soul (*Heb.* vi. 19), the key to open Doubting Castle (*Heb.* x. 23), the Christian's helmet (*1 Thess.* v. 8), the Christian's anticipation (*1 John* iii. 2, 3), and the great holdfast of life (*1 Peter* i. 13).

"Hope (says Thomas Watson) is an active grace; it is called a living hope. It is like the spring in the watch, it sets all the wheels of the soul in motion; hope of a crop makes the husbandman sow his seed; hope of victory makes



the soldier fight; and a true hope of glory makes a Christian vigorous and earnest in seeking glory; this is a spiritual touchstone by which to try our Christian life."

A dying sailor was near his end. The death-sweat stood upon his brow, and a friend said, "Well, how is it with you now?" The dying man, with a smile, made answer, "The anchor holds—the anchor holds." God grant that every one of us may be able to say this when our last moments come. May we catch the light of the guiding star of hope which will lead us to eternal day.

We are out on the ocean sailing,  
Homeward bound we sweetly glide ;  
We are out on the ocean sailing,  
To a home beyond the tide.  
All the storms will soon be over,  
Then we'll anchor in the harbour ;  
We are out on the ocean sailing,  
To a home beyond the tide.

### **Act like Christians.**

*Acts iv. 13.*

The grace of God is something that can be seen, felt, enjoyed, and passed on to others, in its influence and blessing. The Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and became earnest witnesses for Jesus, therefore they were marked men, and all Christians, whether young or old, should be *Reflectors* of Jesus, *Echoes* of Jesus, and brave *Soldiers* for Jesus, so that the world will



take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. Faith makes a Christian, Love proves a Christian, Trial tests a Christian, Life shows a Christian, and Death crowns a Christian. To act like a Christian is to be like the Apostles.

1. **Benevolent and Kind.** Helpers of the Helpless, verse 9.
2. **Bold and Earnest.** Preaching Jesus, verse 12.
3. **Brave and Fearless.** Dared to speak for Jesus, verse 20.
4. **Bright and Happy.** Reflecting Jesus, verse 13.

The Roman Censors took such an utter dislike to the wicked son of Africanus, that they refused to let him wear a ring on which his father's likeness was engraved, alleging, "that he who was so unlike the father's person was unworthy to wear the father's picture." So the Lord will never grant any to enjoy the love of Christ in heaven who are destitute of His likeness on earth. To act like a Christian is to act like Christ in obedience, self-sacrifice, and service.

### **A Bunch of Seven Keys on one Ring.**

*Matt. xxi. 22.*

*"And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive."*

This ring (or verse) presents to us seven bright keys for daily use ; if well used, they will bring us blessing, peace, and joy. The condition



of a happy life is *obedience*, the secret of real service is *faithfulness*, the way to fruitbearing is *abiding*, and the path to constant blessing is *prayer*.

1. **The Breadth of Prayer.** "All things whatsoever." **Liberty.**
2. **The Simplicity of Prayer.** "Ye shall ask." **Simplicity.**
3. **The Reality of Prayer.** "In Prayer." **Reality.**
4. **The Condition of Prayer.** "Believing." **Faith.**
5. **The Individuality of Prayer.** "Ye." **Individuality.**
6. **The Certainty of Prayer.** "Shall." **Promise.**
7. **The Reward of Prayer.** "Receive." **Joy.**

Liberty is a *Big* key. Simplicity is an *Easy* key. Reality is a *Bright* key. Faith is a *Strong* key. Individuality is a *Small* key. Promise is a *Golden* key, and Joy is the *Right* key to use always.

### **A Swarm of Honey B's without Stings.**

There is an interesting swarm of B's in the Epistles of Peter, and if we will open our hearts and make room for them, the Holy Spirit will make them swarm in our souls, and they will fill our lives with the sweet honey of grace and goodness. Let us note them:—

1. **Be sober in mind.** 1 *Peter* i. 13.
2. **Be holy in character.** 1 „ i. 15, 16.



- |                                 |   |              |          |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|----------|
| 3. Be pitiful in spirit.        | I | <i>Peter</i> | iii. 8.  |
| 4. Be courteous in manner.      | I | ,,           | iii. 8.  |
| 5. Be imitators in life.        | I | ,,           | iii. 13. |
| 6. Be ready in testimony.       | I | ,,           | iii. 15. |
| 7. Be watchful in prayer.       | I | ,,           | iv. 7    |
| 8. Be humble in soul.           | I | ,,           | v. 8.    |
| 9. Be vigilant in watchfulness. | I | ,,           | v. 8.    |
| 10. Be diligent in service.     | 2 | ,,           | iii. 14. |

One writer calls the Honey Bees "Travelling bagmen in the sweetmeat line," another describes them as singing masons, skilful mechanics, and model workers. There are lessons from these Honey Bees for every Christian worker, for they, too, are Travellers, Builders, and Workers. And the Bible B's will give to every earnest soul the needed grace for happy life and service.

### Baskets of Blessing.

Baskets in Scripture are frequently used as Pictures of blessing, both in Nature and Grace; Tokens of Promise and Providence, Life and Service, and are full of suggestive thoughts for every believer in Jesus. Through these Bible Baskets we have typical lessons upon the gracious dealings of God with His people, and guides to blessing, cheer, and economy in the great service of the Master. Let us take three of them.

Baskets

- |                 |              |              |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Of Blessing. | 2. Of Fruit. | 3. Of Bread. |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|



1. **The Basket of Blessing.**—(*Deut.* xxviii. 5),  
“Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.”

The storehouse filled (*v.* 8). All fulness in Christ for us. *Col.* i. 19.

The treasure-house opened (*v.* 12). All opened and revealed through Christ. *Eph.* iii. 8.

The basket and store blessed (*v.* 5). Blessed us with all spiritual blessing. *Eph.* i. 3.

The basket filled, enjoyed, and used according to our faith. *Eph.* iii. 18, 19.

2. **The Basket of Fruit.**—(*Amos* viii. 1), “Behold a basket of summer fruit.”

There are two kinds of fruit in life, the fruit of sin and the fruit of grace. *Rom.* vi. 21, 22.

There is a season for the perfecting of these fruits. *Now.* *Luke* xiii. 7.

There is a ripening of this fruit, both bad and good. *Luke* viii. 14, 15.

There will be gathering soon, some for destruction, and some for glory. *Matt.* xiii. 39.

3. **The Basket of Bread.**—(*Mark* vi. 43), “And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments,” etc.

There is bread enough and to spare from the Lord. *Luke* xv. 17.

There is a basket for each worker. *Mark* vi. 41.

There is work for each to gather up the fragments, etc.

The storehouse is God's grace. The treasure-house is His Church. The basket is our indi-



vidual capacity, and the basket and store blessed is present and future good. The condition of blessing our obedience. The measure of blessing His fulness.

"There are three requisites," says Mrs. Hannah More, "to the proper enjoyment of earthly blessings. A thankful reflection on the goodness of the Giver; a deep sense of our unworthiness; and the recollection of the uncertainty of long possessing them. The first would make us grateful, the second humble, and the third moderate."

### **Bible Babes.**

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Babes are always interesting treasures, small bundles of love and hope. The ever-renewed hope of the world—God's problem waiting man's solution. All the language the Babe speaks in its tender years is tears, but they serve him well enough to express his necessity.

Father's hope and mother's joy,  
Our bright little baby boy.

The little babe in its helplessness is a striking illustration of human need and weakness. The babe is saved and preserved on the ground of having everything done for him, *Washed, Clothed, and Fed*; and so are we in a spiritual sense, Washed from our sins by Jesus, Clothed in His Righteousness, and Fed by the Bread of life, or we should perish like the neglected Babe.



Bible Babes will suggest many lessons suitable for Tiny Folks. We have

1. **The Humble Babe.** Jesus (*Luke* ii. 16). The fulfilment of a Promise.
2. **The Weeping Babe.** Moses (*Ex.* ii. 6). The Care of Providence.
3. **The Growing Babes.** (1 *Peter* ii. 2). The Picture of Progress.
4. **The Instructed Babes.** (*Matt.* xi. 21). The Subjects of Privilege.
5. **The Happy Babes.** (*Matt.* xxi. 16). The Instruments of Praise.

Pictures of Birth, Preservation, Growth, Education, and Service of the children of God. In a very important sense every Babe is a Fulfilment of Promise, a care of Providence, a subject of Privilege, and can be made by grace an instrument of Praise and Glory to God.

“The baby wept,  
The mother took it from the nurse’s arms,  
And soothed its grief, and stilled its vain alarms,  
And baby slept.  
Again it weeps,  
And God doth take it from its mother’s arms,  
From present pain, and future unknown harms,  
And baby sleeps.”—*Hinds*.

“Childhood shows the man, as morning shows the day.”  
—*Milton*.

“A babe is,  
A sweet, new blossom of humanity,  
Fresh fallen from God’s own home to flower on earth.”  
—*Massey*.



**Bible Fire-Escape.**

Fire is one of the most valuable blessings we have in life, when it is properly governed and guided, but one of the most hurtful powers when it is not controlled. "A good servant but a bad master." The destructive force of fire is feared by everyone, and wise people always insure their **Lives, Homes, and Property** against its injurious effects. Fire is one of the strong symbols in the Bible. It points us to the Holiness of God, the burning power of Sin, the sanctifying force of Grace, and the sweeping power of Judgment; and wise indeed are all those who are insured by grace, saved by Jesus, and proof against every burning fire by the mighty power of God. The Fire-Escape teaches us important spiritual lessons, and may help us to insure against the evil, and get into the place of safety. Let us note.

1. **The Fire Disaster. Judgment,** *Gen.* xix. 24, 25; *2 Peter* iii. 7.
2. **The Fire-Escape. Salvation,** *Gen.* xix. 16, 17; *1 Thess.* i. 10; *Matt.* iii. 7.
3. **The Firemen. Preachers,** *Gen.* xix. 17; *2 Cor.* v. 20.
4. **The Fire Brands. Saved Sinners,** *Zech.* iii. 2; *Amos* iv. 11; *Jude* 23.
5. **The Fire Insurance. Obedience, safety in Christ,** *Gen.* xix. 29; *Col.* iii. 31.



"Some years ago there was a great fire in Dublin, a high block of buildings was alight below, and the fire was working its way up to the top of the buildings very rapidly. A number of people were at the windows above calling out for help. The Fire-Escape was heard coming in the distance, and the crowd of anxious spectators gave a cheer of hope, but imagine the dismay when it was found the Fire-Escape was **too short** to reach the perishing. Thank God the Gospel Fire-Escape, Jesus, is never too short, and is always near to save those who trust Him."

### *Bible Pillars.*

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Pillars are emblems of strength, support, and permanent power, and Bible Pillars tell us of the Power of Divine love, the strength of unfailing truth, and the abiding nature of God's grace.

The Pillar of our Salvation is—"God is love."  
1 *John* iv. 8.

The Pillar of our Faith—"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." 1 *Cor.* xv. 3.

The Pillar of our Hope—"Christ in us the hope of glory." *Col.* i. 27.

The Pillars of truth and testimony. The living witnesses of Jesus Christ. (*Gal.* ii. 9.) In one sense, the Bible is the great Pillar of Truth, the Church the great Pillar of Fellowship, and the love and life of God's people on earth the abiding

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testimony of His grace and blessing ; but note the Bible Pillars.

1. **The Pillar of Memorial**—Blessing. *Gen.* xxviii. 18.
2. **The Pillar of Cloud**—Guidance. *Ex.* xxxiii. 9.
3. **The Pillars of Strength**—Stability. *I Kings* vii. 21.
4. **The Pillars of Truth**—Testimony. *Gal.* ii. 9.
5. **The Pillar of Salt**—Warning. *Gen.* xix. 26.

“ In the Cathedral of St. Mark, in Venice—a marvellous building, lustrous with an Oriental splendour beyond description—there are Pillars said to have been brought from Solomon’s Temple ; these are of alabaster, a substance firm and durable as granite, and yet transparent, so that the light flows through them. Behold an emblem of what all true Pillars of the Church should be—firm in their faith and transparent in their character ; men of simple mould, men of strong will, and not readily to be laid aside or bent from their uprightness.”—*Spurgeon.*

## **Bible Pitchers.**

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Pitchers in the Bible are generally associated with Service, and are interestingly linked both with history and revelation, and they will serve as striking object-lessons for illustrating the different features of Christian service. The



Earthen Pitcher points to our weakness, the Empty Pitcher to our fitness by grace, the Broken Pitcher to our submission, and the Water Pitcher to our usefulness. If we belong to Jesus we must be willing to be emptied of self, cleansed from sin, fitted by grace, and filled with the Holy Spirit, and made meet for the Master's use. There are—

1. **Earthen Pitchers.** (*Lam.* iv. 2). Unfit for service.
2. **Empty Pitchers.** (*Judges* vii. 16). Fitted for service.
3. **Broken Pitchers.** (*Judges* vii. 19). Ready for service.
4. **Service Pitchers.** (*Gen.* xxiv. 45, 46). Willing for service.
5. **Water Pitchers.** (*Mark* xiv. 13, 14). Used in service.

It is interesting to notice that common things like earthen pitchers were important links in the Lord's purposes of love, in the history of the nation, and the services of Jesus. Yet that really was so, and in this sense they are pictures of the Lord's humble instruments that He now uses in His service. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," (2 *Cor.* iv. 7), says the Apostle, that all the glory may be the Lord's.

Oh to be nothing, nothing !  
 Only to lie at His feet  
 A broken and emptied vessel,  
 For the Master's use made meet.



## **Bible Posts.**

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There is a great deal of precious truth gathers round the Door Posts of Scripture. Door Posts are places of decision for Salvation and Service too. The Sprinkled Post means salvation, the Speaking Post means blessing, the Separating Post means service, and the Sacred Post means worship. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." (*Prov. viii. 34.*) But let us fix these Posts in order, so that we may remember them.

1. **The Sprinkled Post.** (*Ex. xii. 7*). **Salvation.**
2. **The Speaking Post.** (*Deut. xi. 20*). **Obedience.**
3. **The Separating Post.** (*Ex. xxi. 6*). **Service.**
4. **The Shaking Post.** (*Is. vi. 4*). **Holiness.**
5. **The Sacred Post.** (*Prov. viii. 34*). **Blessing.**

There is a legend that on the night of the Exodus a young Jewish maiden—the first-born of the family—was so troubled on her sick-bed that she could not sleep. "Father," she anxiously inquired, "are you sure that the blood is there?" He replied that he had ordered it to be sprinkled on the lintel. The restless girl could not be satisfied until her Father had taken her up and carried her to the door to see for herself; and lo! the blood was not there. The order had been neglected, but before midnight



the Father made haste to put on his door the sacred token of protection. The legend may be false; but it teaches a very weighty truth to every sinful soul who may be still unsaved, and not secured by the blood of Jesus. Let us be sure it is sprinkled upon our hearts at once.

### **Bible Rings.**

The Gold Ring is the expression of Love, the Token of Relationship, the Link of Friendship, the Mark of Honour, and the Sign of Authority. So the Bible Rings are tokens of spiritual blessing, emblems of grace, and signs of future honour and glory for all the saints of God.

1. **The Saviour's Rings.**—The Mark of Love.  
*Song of Solomon* v. 14.
2. **The Son's Ring.**—The Token of Relationship.  
*Luke* xv. 22.
3. **The Saint's Ring.**—The Pledge of Blessing.  
*Ezek.* xvi. 12 ; *Job* xlii. 11.
4. **The Servant's Ring.**—The Sign of Authority.  
*Esther* viii. 2.
5. **The Steward's Ring.**—The Emblem of Honour.  
*Genesis* xli. 42.

An English lady, writing from Syria, says that the Mohammedan girls are continually singing our beautiful hymns in Arabic. "Safe in the arms of Jesus" is a great favourite. A little



Moslem girl accounted for her preference for the Christian religion by saying, "I like your Jesus, because He loves little girls. Our Mohammed did not love little girls."

### THERE ARE IN THE BIBLE—

1. **Rings of Love.**—*Song of Solomon* v. 14.
2. **Rings of Authority.**—*Genesis* xli. 42.
3. **Rings of Friendship.**—*Job* xlii. 11.
4. **Rings of Power.**—*Esther* viii. 8.
5. **Rings of Beauty.**—*Ezekiel* xvi, 12,
6. **Rings of Welcome.**—*Luke* xv. 22.

### **Bible Towers.**

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Sin exposes us to danger. Self deludes us into death, and it is only the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who can bring us salvation and safety; and happy is the man or child who can say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (*Psalms* xlvi. 1). Jesus is a Refuge to save us, a Stronghold to preserve us, a Tower to defend us, and a Hiding-place to secure us; for "the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (*Prov.* xviii. 10). Now, let us take our Bibles, and see what some of these towers teach us; we have—

1. **A Warning Tower, to avoid.** *Genesis* xi. 4.  
We will call this Tower Self-will.



2. **A Wonderful Tower, to enter.** *Prov. xviii. 10.*  
We will call this Tower Salvation.
3. **A Welcome Tower, to enjoy.** *2 Samuel xxii. 3.*  
We will call this Tower Protection.
4. **A Witness Tower, to glory in** *Psalms xviii. 2 ;*  
*and cxliv. 2.* "The Lord is my rock."  
We will call this Tower Testimony.
5. **A Watch Tower, to use** *Hab. ii. 1.* "I will  
stand upon my watch, and set me upon the  
tower."  
We will call this Tower Hope.

"Father," said a little boy, "am I stronger than Satan?" "No, my son, you are not." "Are you stronger than Satan, father?" "No, I am not." "Is Jesus stronger than Satan?" "Yes, my son, He is. Jesus has conquered Satan." "Then I will trust Him."

"When is Jesus coming," asked a little girl of a Christian servant, who was just then busy with her work polishing the grate. "I can't say," said the Christian maid; "perhaps to-day." "Well," said the little one, "if I were you, I'd make haste and tidy myself and be ready." What a wise thought of this little girl.

### **Bible Bottles. Bags. and Baskets.**

Symbols of Truth, Signs of Blessing, and the Similes of Service are the spiritual lessons we can gather from this group of familiar objects.



They are only common things, but when set apart by the Holy Spirit as illustrations of Divine truth, then they are treasures indeed. And we might arrange them this way, to secure the suggested truth : Bottles of water, Bags of treasure, and Baskets of blessing. Let us carefully open them and examine their contents, in order to enjoy the blessings.

### 1. **Bottles of Water.**

Bottles of water—the world's emptiness.

(*Gen.* xxi. 15).—*Failure.*

Bottles of Heaven—Divine goodness. (*Job* xxxviii. 37).—*Fulness.*

Bottles of water—real sympathy. (*Psalms* lvi. 8).—*Fondness.*

Spring tears, rain water, and eye water.

### 2. **Bags of Treasure.**

Bag sealed up—our sins. (*Job* xiv. 17).—*Shame.*

Bag with holes—our folly. (*Hag.* i. 6).—*Simplicity.*

Bag of the thief—our covetousness. (*John* xii. 6).—*Selfishness.*

What treasure to be sealed up, and the seal will be broken soon.

### 3. **Baskets of Blessing.**

Basket of blessing promised. (*Deut.* xxviii. 5).—*Promise.*

Basket of fruit ripe. (*Amos* viii. 1).—*Picture.*

Basket of bread gathered. (*Mark* vi. 43).—*Provision.*



Providence is God's great basket by which He conveys His blessings to us, and God's measure is overflowing fulness.

Our hearts may be bottles to hold the water of life (*John* iv. 14); our lives, like bags, may gather up treasures for eternity (*Matt.* vi. 20); and our service may be as baskets of blessing we minister to others in the Lord's name *Mark* vi. 43.

### **Bible Keys.**

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Keys are emblems of authority, privilege, and power; they are most useful to open doors of blessing and hope, to bring us into the household of faith, the storehouse of grace, and fields of service. Jesus Himself holds the Keys of Life and Death, but to His people He has committed the keys of blessing and help. He has given us the Keys of Knowledge and Faith, Keys of Privilege and Power, Keys of Salvation and Service, and with these keys we can pass into the fulness of Love, Life, and Liberty, as "Stewards of the manifold grace of God." But there are a few special Keys in the Bible which are worth noting.

1. **The Steward's Keys**, to open the House of Mercy. *Is.* xxii. 22.
2. **The Teacher's Keys**, to open the School of Grace. *Luke* xi. 52.



3. **The Preacher's Keys**, to open the Kingdom of Heaven. *Matt.* xvi. 52.
4. **The Master's Keys**, to open the Door to Service. *Rev.* iii. 7.
5. **The Conqueror's Keys**, to open the Unseen World. *Rev.* i. 18.

Every Preacher of the Gospel, every Teacher in the Sunday School, every worker for God should know all these Keys, and be able to use them or tell how they are used. *Prayer* will turn the Steward's Key, *Knowledge* will use the Teacher's Key, *Faith* will use the Preacher's Key, *Obedience* will turn the Master's Key, and *Hope* will rejoice in the Conqueror's Key. The right use of these Keys gives us the great secret of Power and Blessing.

### **Bible Bells: What Do They Say?**

Bells are used for many purposes in almost every sphere of earthly life and service. They call us to school; invite us to dinner; remind us of work; ask us to church; warn us of danger; and tell us of death. Bells in their different services illustrate the action and power of the Word of God in its various calls, directions, and warnings. The Bible is full of calls, appeals, and warnings to men in every stage and station of life. Its precious truths sound like the bells of heaven upon earth, calling men to God, home,



and rest. Let us see if we can catch the sound of these bells :—

1. **The Fire Bell of Warning.** "Escape for thy life" (*Gen.* xix. 17). *Danger and Death.*
2. **The Church Bell of Love.** "God so loved the world" (*John* iii. 16). *Love and Life.*
3. **The Dinner Bell of Grace.** "Come, for all things are now ready" (*Matt.* xxii. 4). *Grace and Glory.*
4. **The School Bell of Light.** "Learn of Me," etc. (*Matt.* xi. 29), *Light and Learning.*
5. **The Work Bell of Life.** "Son, go work to-day" (*Matt.* xxi. 28). *Sonship and Service.*
6. **The Golden Bell of Testimony.** "A golden bell and pomegranate" (*Ex.* xxviii. 34). *Faithfulness and Fruit.*
7. **The Passing Bell of Death.** "It is appointed unto men once to die" (*Heb.* ix. 27). *Death and Judgment.*

Amongst the many wonderful things to be seen at the World's Fair, in Chicago, there was a remarkable bell called *Liberty Bell*. It was made in the City of Troy, State of New York, and is composed, it is said, of "200,000 historic relics melted down and molten into one." In this extraordinary bell, we are told, there are "flings from chains worn by prisoners in the mines of Kara; the flint-lock from the gun of Jefferson; bits of cannon from the field of Waterloo; twenty



things dear to the memory of George Washington; particles from the Vendôme Column; metal mementoes in memory of Lincoln; a cowbell from the home of William Tell; and medals worn by heroes who served under Garibaldi. All these together tell of tyranny, cruelty, and suffering in the generations past, and remind us of the happy change that has come over the spirit of the present age, through the influence of the Gospel of Christ.

There are *ten* wonderful bells in the belfry of St. Michael's Church, Coventry. In addition to being noted for their purity of tone, these bells are remarkable for their quaint mottoes. *The treble bell* bears the motto—"Although I am both light and small, I will be heard above you all." *The second declares*—"If you have a judicious ear, You'll own my voice to be sweet and clear." *The third*—"Such wondrous power to music given, It elevates the soul to heaven." *The fourth*—"While thus we join in cheerful sound, May love and loyalty abound." *The fifth*—"In honour both to God and King, Our voices shall in concert sing." *The sixth*—"Music is medicine to the mind." *The seventh*—"Ye ringers all who prize your health and happiness, Be sober, merry, wise, and you'll the same possess." *The eighth*—"Ye people all that hear me ring, Be faithful to your God and King." *The ninth*—"In wedlock's bonds all ye who join, With hands and hearts unite; So shall our tuneful tongues



combine, To laud the nuptial rite." *The Tenor*—"I have been called the common bell, To ring when fire breaks out to tell."

These different mottoes describe a combination of qualities of service, and suggest the many excellent features of the Gospel bell of Grace, with its clear sound of truth, its sweet tone of love, its great power of blessing, its cheering notes of grace, its harmonious voice of praise, its heavenly music of joy, its happy ring of life, its glad song of peace, its loud call to glory, and its solemn warning of danger.

### **Bible Birds.**

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Everything in God's creation has its place assigned it by the Lord Himself. Everything has its own sphere of action and service, and everything has its existence for the glory of the Creator, and the instruction, comfort and blessing of man; the fish in the sea, the beasts in the field, and the birds in the air, all speak of God to man. Let us hear what the birds say to us, of God's wisdom, goodness, and love.

1. **The Raven** speaks to us of God's *Providence*.  
The supply of Providence (*Job xxxviii. 41, Ps. cxlvii. 9*). The mystery of Providence (*1 Kings xvii. 1, 6*). The God of Providence. *Luke xii. 24*.
2. **The Sparrow** speaks to us of *Trust*.  
There are two lessons from the sparrow.



The value of life (*Matt. x. 22*), and the use of little things (*Luke xii. 6, 7*). All who trust God, He supplies.

3. **The Dove** speaks to us of *Peace*.

This, I think, may be called the favourite bird in Scripture, and is a guide to anything that is gentle and good.

The emblems of peace (*Gen. viii. 8, 12*). The means of mercy. *Lev. i. 14*.

The illustrations of safety (*Song of S. ii. 14*). The symbol of the Holy Spirit. *John i. 32*.

The lesson for the Christian (*Matt. x. 16*). We need wisdom and simplicity.

4. **The Eagle** speaks to us of *Strength*.

This remarkable bird is often mentioned in Scripture, and is used by the Lord to illustrate spiritual things.

The eagle is strong on the wing (*Is. xl. 31*).  
*Faith.*

The eagle is strong in the eye (*Ezek. i. 10*).  
*Intelligence.*

The eagle is strong in its grip (*Prov. xxx. 19*).  
*Power.*

The eagle is strong in affection (*Deut. xxxii. 11*).  
*Love.*

## THE BIRD A TEACHER.

"One warm Sabbath morning the doors of a church were open. During the progress of the service a bird entered, and flew up to the vaulted roof, and tried with every effort it could to make



its escape. There sat in one of the pews a woman who had been under deep conviction of sin for many months. She watched the bird, and thought how silly it was not to go to the open door of the church and enjoy its liberty at once. When its wings were weary it lowered itself into the body of the church, saw the door open, and flew out in a moment, and was soon singing outside. After the bird had gone this poor woman thought, 'that is just what I have been doing. I have been trying and trying, and the door of mercy is open all the time,' and at once she looked away to Jesus and was saved."—*(Information and Illustration.)*

### ***Bible Laddies.***

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There are several bright little lads mentioned in Scripture whose experience and service may guide and help the boys and girls who read this. They hold, as it were, a lamp with a shining light across the path of all who are following in their footsteps. The Holy Spirit has introduced these interesting lads, no doubt, to teach us a few clear lessons of *prayer, obedience, blessing, activity, and service.*

1. We first meet a **Suffering Lad**, in *Gen. xxi. 16, 17*, who shows us the value of *Prayer*.

"And God heard the voice of the lad" . . .  
"and God was with the lad." He cried in his suffering and distress, and the Lord heard him.



"Crying" is the natural way for a child to make known its needs to its father, whilst "Praying" is the cry of our souls to our Heavenly Father. The Lord always hears us. *Ps. xxxiv. 6.*

2. **The Submissive Lad** comes next, in *Gen. xxii. 5*, with *Obedience* as his motto.

"And I and the lad will go yonder, and worship, and come again to you." The secret of Isaac's happy, peaceful life, was his willing obedience to God. Isaac was an example of obedience. "They went both of them together," a lesson of loving submission, "and laid him on the altar;" a light to the Lord Jesus, "God will provide Himself a lamb."

3. Now let us notice the **Saving Lad**, in *Gen. xliii. 8*, who is a *Blessing*.

Little Benjamin was the centre of interest, the link of blessing, and the bond of union. No corn, nor happiness, nor hope, without him. In these particulars Benjamin is a picture of the Lord Jesus, and a help to every boy. Every true Christian is a link of blessing to others.

4. **The Selected Lad**, in *1 Sam. xx. 36*, teaches us the value of *Activity*.

"And he said unto his lad, Run and find out now the arrows." This willing, active lad did a great work in Israel that day. He was a signal of warning to David, "Is not the arrow beyond thee?" a smart servant for Jonathan, "Make



speed, haste, stay not;" and a saviour of a king and a kingdom, even though he knew it not.  
v. 39.

Every Christian boy should be active for Jesus, and always ready to help and be kind to others.

5. There is one more, the **Serving Lad**, in *John* vi. 9. *Service* is his lesson to us.

There were three things which fitted this lad for service. He was following Jesus. He was in the right place—close to Jesus. He had five loaves and two fishes. He had the right things—grace and gifts. He was found willing to lend them to Jesus. He had the right spirit—a willing heart.

These are the qualifications needed for the Lord's service. We must be *near, prepared, and willing*. "Who will be the next to follow Jesus?"

This lad would have delighted John Wesley, whose advice is:—"Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. To all the people you can. In all the ways you can. In all places you can. As long as ever you can."

When Count Zinzendorf was a little boy at school, he founded a small Guild amongst his schoolfellows, which he called the "Order of the Grain of Mustard-seed," and thereafter that seedling grew into the great brotherhood, now known by the name of Moravians, who have proved such a blessing to the world.

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## **Boats on the Ocean of Life.**

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The Lord Jesus was often found at the sea-side, and many of His most telling illustrations were taken from the sea and its business. He compared His followers with fishermen, the Gospel of the kingdom with the fishing net, and the separation of the bad fish from the good, with the dividing of the wicked from the righteous in the end of the age. We may safely follow the Lord's method of illustration, and take our lessons from the different *Boats* mentioned and referred to in Scripture, and gather up the spiritual light suggested. There is the Life Boat, the Ferry Boat, and the Fishing Boat, etc., and all with some clear definite practical truth intimated.

1. **The First Boat.**—A symbol of Salvation. *Gen.* vi. 14.  
     Jesus is the world's Life Boat. *John* iii. 16.
2. **The Ferry Boat.**—An emblem of Fellowship.  
     *2 Sam.* xix. 18.  
     Jesus brings us all into the family of God and fellowship of service. *Gal.* iii. 26.
3. **The Freight Boat.**—A picture of the Church.  
     *John* vi. 21.  
     Jesus in the vessel we smile at the storm. *Matt.* xiv. 33.
4. **The Fishing Boat.**—A sign of Service. *Matt.* iv. 21, 22.



Jesus makes obedient ones fishers of men.

*Matt.* iv. 19.

5. **The Following Boats.**—An illustration of the Sunday School. *John* vi. 23.

Jesus is the attraction for all. "Seeking for Jesus." *John* vi. 24.

6. **The Failing Boat.**—A signal of Doom. *Acts* xxvii. 41.

Jesus is the Life Boat, the Gospel is the Life Line, Grace is the Life Buoy, the Body is the Breaking Vessel, the Soul is the Life Treasure, and Heaven is the Living Home.

Now to the Life Boat.

We read in *Genesis* vi. 7 of the ark (the world's Life Boat). It was made according to the instructions given by the Lord Himself. It had *Rooms* for its inmates, *Space* for its fitness, a *Window* for its light, and a *Door* for its entrance and safety. So the Lord Jesus is the Lord's provision of grace for the salvation of the world, or for whosoever will. There is Room in His mercy, Space in His love, Light in His Church, and Safety and security in His power, for all the human family; and the Lord is calling by the Gospel of His grace to all, "Come thou, and all thy house into the ark" (*Gen.* vii. 1). "Come, for all things are now ready" (*Luke* xiv. 17).

There was an awful storm once on the East Coast of England, and a ship was seen in great danger. The life boat was launched, but owing



to some delay, there was great fear it would be of little or no use. As it was nearing a well-known dangerous spot, the coxswain that had command of the brave band of sailors thus going forth to rescue their fellow-creatures said, "Mates, shall we turn back? The ship has sunk. I fear it is too late." It certainly seemed an act of folly to persevere. But one of the crew answered, "As I ran to the cliff, I saw behind the hedge two ladies praying. I am a wild sort of chap, but I do believe that God hears prayer. We shall save some lives." This was enough. On the gallant life boat ploughed its way through the dangerous breakers, but the ship had gone down. No sign remained either of her or her crew. The life boat drifted four miles. In her drifting, however, she picked up one, and then another, till eight were saved. Thus the shipwrecked crew were rescued, and lived to tell how their lives were saved in answer to the prayer of those two Christian ladies. Let us pray, and sow, and toil in the Master's Name, and we shall bring many to the eternal shore.

### **Books.**

"Books are like ships; they navigate the seas of time, and touch the distant ages."—*Bacon.*

"Our books, we live again in them  
Our being's noblest part;  
Our names in many a memory;  
Our home in many a heart."—*Miss Landon.*



But the Book of Books is the Bible. It contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. It is given us in life, will be opened at the Judgment, and will be remembered for ever.

"Holy Bible, Book Divine,  
Precious treasure thou art mine."

But there are many books through which God speaks to us.

1. **The Book of Pictures.** Creation. *Ps.* xix. 1, 5.
2. **The Book of Mercies.** Providence. *Ps.* cvii. 1; *Rom.* ii. 4; *Ps.* xxxvii. 25.
3. **The Book of Stories.** Bible. *John* v. 39; *Luke* xxiv. 44.
4. **The Book of Days.** Experience. *Job* xxxii. 7.
5. **The Book of Salvation.** Book of Life. *Rev.* xx. 15.
6. **The Book of Accounts.** Judgment. *Rev.* xx. 12.

"Books are life-long friends, whom we come to love and know as we do our children."—S. L. Boardman.

"The Bible is the best of all books. It is a rock of diamonds, a chain of pearls, the sword of the Spirit, a chart by which the Christian sails to eternity; the map by which he daily walks;



the sun-dial by which he sets his life; and the balance in which he weighs his actions."—*T. Watson.*

Sir Walter Scott, during his last illness, asked his son-in-law to read to him out of the Book. "What book?" was the question; and the great man's reply was, "There is only one Book—the Bible. In the whole world it is called 'The Book,' all other books are mere leaves and fragments. The Bible is the only complete, perfect Book. Its light sheds brightness over the grave and into eternity. It is the only Book."

A little girl on her dying bed gave her Bible to her brother, saying, "Take this, Georgie, and keep it for my sake, but most of all because it is God's Book; I am sure of it, for it has taught me the way to heaven. It has been a lovely light to me on earth, but I am going where I shall not need it any more. Read it, Georgie, and let us meet in heaven."

May we have light and grace to wisely view God's pictures, count His mercies, read His stories, obtain His salvation, and be ready for the great book of accounts at last.

### **Candles of Scripture.**

1. **The Candle of the Lord: Conscience.**—(*Prov.* xx. 27; *Ps.* xviii. 28.). Conscience is the candle of the Lord fixed in every breast, and is the natural light which makes us sensible of right



and wrong. But it must be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and guided by the Word of God, or else it is not a sure guide to salvation and life. When the Holy Spirit enlightens conscience, then there is conviction of sin, sense of danger, and an earnest cry for help. *Acts* xvi. 30.

**2. The Candle of Grace: Love.**—(*Luke* xv. 8). This candle of grace lights us to salvation and joy.

It is a Search light to seek the lost. *Luke* xix. 10.

It is a Divine light to find the helpless. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 16.

It is a Warm light to welcome the found ones. *Luke* xv. 22.

**3. The Candle of Testimony: Life.**—(*Matt.* v. 15.) When we are saved we become the candles for the Lord.

A candle lit for the right purpose, *v.* 14; *Phil.* ii. 15.

A candle put in the right place, *v.* 15.

A candle shining for God's glory, *v.* 16.

**4. The Candle Put Out: Death.**—(*Job* xviii. 6.) The light of nature and the spark of reason may do for this world, but will never light us to the other world in safety, and death will come and put it all out. This is no light for the soul, and when death comes it is often too late to get Divine light. *Matt.* xxv. 8; *Luke* xiii. 25, 26.



5. **The Candle Outshone: Glory.**—(*Rev.* xxii. 5). There is a bright, glorious future for God's people. No night of darkness, no night of sorrow, and no night of death. *Rev.* xx. 1, 5.

## Children.

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The photographer is often asked to take a group of children sitting, standing, or playing, and these juvenile lives are some of the most inspiring touches in earth's busy scenes. The Holy Spirit, the greatest of all artists, has given us in the Bible a number of thought pictures of busy children, taking an active part in important events of past history—*marching, praying, shouting, and singing*—and they give a very tender touch to all these interesting experiences. We have—

1. **Children Starting Pilgrimage.**—*Ex.* xii. 37.
2. **Children Standing Praying.**—*2 Chron.* xx. 13.
3. **Children Seeking Blessing.**—*Matt.* xix. 13, 14.
4. **Children Shouting Hosanna.**—*Matt.* xxi. 15.
5. **Children Singing Praises.**—*Ps.* cxlviii. 12.

At a gathering of children on Christmas Day, a gentleman present related a very interesting incident. A little girl was very anxious to know why Christmas evergreens were so much used, and what they all meant. So a kind friend told her the story of the Babe of Bethlehem, of the



Child whose name was *Jesus*. When he had concluded the narrative, she looked up into his face and asked, "Did Jesus sing?" Who had ever thought of that! If we look at *Matt.* xxvi. 30, we shall find almost conclusive proof that Jesus did sing with His disciples: "And when they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives." What an encouragement for us to sing; let us do it with all our hearts.

### Choose Right Companions.

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*Ps.* cxix. 63.

We can safely judge of persons by the company they keep. Birds of a feather flock together, and the choice of a companion is one of the tests of our own character. Shakespeare says, "It is certain that either wise bearing or ignorant behaviour is caught as men take disease, one of another. Therefore let men take heed of their company." Let us note the Bible warnings and the Bible counsel with regard to our companions, then we shall be safe. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (*Prov.* xiii. 20). By grace we may become companions of the King Himself. (1 *Chron.* xxvii. 33.) Choose

1. **Godly Companions.** Like David. *Ps.* cxix. 63.
2. **Loving Companions.** Like Paul. *Acts* xix. 29.



3. **Busy Companions.** Like Epaphroditus. *Phil.* ii. 25.
4. **Faithful Companions.** Like the Martyrs. *Heb.* x. 33.
5. **Holy Companions.** Like John. *Rev.* i. 9.

Judge Buller, when in the company of a young gentleman of sixteen, cautioned him against being led astray by the example or persuasion of others, and said, "If I had listened to the advice of some of those who called themselves my friends, when I was young, instead of being a *Judge* of the King's Bench, I should have been long ago a prisoner in the King's Prison." Choose right companions.

### \*\* Come. \*\*

There are three special "Comes" in the Bible. The Father's Come—"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord," etc. (*Is.* i. 18). The Saviour's Come—"Come unto Me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (*Matt.* xi. 28); and the Holy Spirit's Come—"Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely," etc. (*Rev.* xxii. 17). The tenderest word in the Bible is "*Come*;" it is the epitome of the Gospel, and expresses the heart love of our God, and there is a standing promise of Jesus to all who come to Him, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out" (*John* vi. 37). But what does it mean to come to Jesus?



**C** Confidence of the heart.

**O** Obedience of the will.

**M** Movement of the mind.

**E** Earnestness of the soul.

A young girl was weeping for her sins, but could not feel that she was pardoned. “Suppose,” her teacher said, “that Jesus was in this room, what would you do?” “I would go to Him at once,” she replied. “And what would you tell Him?” “That I was a lost sinner.” “And what would you ask Him?” “I would ask Him if He would forgive me.” “And what would Jesus answer?” She hesitated a moment, and then she looked up, smiling through her tears, for at once she saw it all. “Why,” she said, “*He would answer, ‘Yes.’*” And simply trusting in the Saviour’s word, she went to Him then and there, and Jesus said, “Yes.”—*T. Bishop.*

### **Cords that Bind.**

Cords in their common use are amongst the most useful articles of service in this busy world of ours. They are required for binding, holding, and securing everything of a loose, moving, shifting nature, and are indispensable in our business life.

Bible Cords, too, we shall find useful in a higher service, if we can only get hold of them at the right end. With a careful arrangement of these Cords we can connect Bible thoughts,



illustrate the truth, strengthen our faith, link ourselves with Jesus, and bind and fix our hearts to eternal things. There is no doubt the Holy Spirit intends that these *Bible Cords*, by their frequent use in the Word, should teach us a variety of definite lessons upon the great subjects of Sin and Sorrow, Love and Life, Faith and Fellowship, Salvation and Service. Let us note the passages :—

1. **The Strong Cords of Sin** (*Ps.* v. 22). *Bondage.*
2. **The Securing Cords of Justice** (*Ps.* cxviii. 27).  
*Bitterness.*
3. **The Drawing Cords of Love** (*Jer.* xxxi. 3).  
*Blessing.*
4. **The Sure Cords of Salvation** (*Josh.* ii. 15).  
*Blessedness.*
5. **The United Cord of Power** (*Eccl.* iv. 12).  
*Bound for ever.*

The Father's love, the Son's light, and the Holy Spirit's life, cannot be broken. The only Cord that can bind Christians together is Concord. In the Bible there is the Scarlet Thread of Blood, the Strong Cord of Faith, and the Life Line of Grace. Threefold Love, Threefold Grace, and Threefold Power. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12; 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14; *Eccl.* iv. 12.

No Cord nor Cable can draw so forcibly, or bind so fast, as love can do with only a single thread. The ancient Thebans had in their armies a band of men that were called *The holy*



*band*, consisting of such, from the various regiments and battalions, as were joined together in a band of love, and were sworn to live and die together in the service of their country. These men were of great value. They were esteemed the strength of the army, and in time of special danger or alarm were looked to as the nation's hope.

### Cups of Scripture.

The word Cup in Scripture is sometimes used to describe the vessel itself, and at other times it points to the contents of the Cup. It generally, however, means some measured portion, either good or evil. Judgment or Mercy, Bane or Blessing. Yes, everything is measured by the Lord. *Sin* with all its evil, both of nations and individuals, is reckoned, weighed, and measured by a Divine standard. And when the Cup of iniquity is filled up, then it is punished. *Wrath* is measured by the Righteousness of God. The *Cross* gives us the right view of this, for it was borne by the Lord Jesus Himself.

“Death and the curse were in our cup :  
 O Christ t'was full for Thee !  
 But Thou hast drained the last dark drop,  
 'Tis empty now for me.  
 That bitter cup, love drank it up ;  
 Now blessing's draught for me.”

*Love and Mercy*, too, are measured out to the sinner. They are abundant, full, and free,



according to God's riches in glory by Christ Jesus. If accepted they bring salvation to the uttermost, but if rejected, death and doom. The Cross of Christ is God's estimate of *Sin*, and His measure of *Love* and *Mercy* to the world, and the Gospel of His grace is His full *Cup* of blessing to perishing sinners.

1. **The Cup of Suffering.** *Matt.* xxvi. 29. *Bitterness.*
2. **The Cup of Salvation.** *Ps.* cxvi. 13. *Blessedness.*
3. **The Cup of Service.** *Matt.* x. 42. *Benevolence.*
4. **The Cup of Solace.** *I Cor.* xi. 26. *Blessing.*
5. **The Cup of Sorrow.** *Ps.* xi. 6; *Rev.* xvi. 19.  
*Bane.*

The Cup of Suffering shows us God's hatred to sin, His love to the world, and Christ's obedience unto death.

The Cup of Salvation is full of the blessings of grace. We have to take it, *drink*, and then hand it on to others.

The Cup of Service brings great blessing and reward. It is a Cup to take (*Ps.* cxvi. 13); a Cup to hold (*Ps.* xxiii. 5); and a Cup to give. *Matt.* x. 42.

The Cup of Blessing connects us with the covenant of grace, the cleansing Blood, spiritual blessing, communion of saints, and the coming of the Lord.

The Cup of Sorrow is "The wrath to come." There are three things coming soon—the Coming of the Lord, the Coming of the Glory, and the



Coming Wrath. Which are we preparing for? "Because there is wrath beware lest He take thee away with His stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." *Job xxxvi. 18.*

### **Finger-marks in the Bible.**

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The Bible is full of striking metaphors of God Himself, His power, His grace, and His glory. The Scriptures speak of Him as having a heart of love, eyes of knowledge, ears to hear, lips of grace, hands of skill, and fingers of power. The finger of God means His touch of power, both in nature and in grace. The finger of Christ means His sympathetic touch of love, healing, and blessing. The finger of man means his skill, faith, and feeling. The different actions of the finger, both human and Divine, noted in Scripture, may be called *Bible finger-marks*. They point us to some wonderful touches of God, and to some important instances of faith, fear, and service of man,

1. **The Finger Marks of Sin.** (*Prov. vi. 13, 12, 15, and Isaiah lix. 3*), depravity, deception, and destruction.
2. **The Finger Marks of Power.** (*Exodus viii. 19, Psalms viii. 3, and Luke xi. 20*), in creation, redemption, and salvation.



3. **The Finger Marks of Love.** (*Mark* viii. 23; vii. 33), the touch of healing, health, and hope.
4. **The Finger Marks of Fear.** (*John* xx. 25), the touch of fear and feeling instead of faith.
5. **The Finger Marks of Faith.** (*Mark* v. 27, 28, 34), the touch of faith, fear, then healing.
6. **The Finger Marks of Wrath.** (*Daniel* v. 5, 24), the disclosure, the dread, and the doom.

A man was employed to whiten the walls of a room; the fluid used was colourless till dried. Being left alone, he opened a drawer, examined a pocket-book, and handled the papers, but, finding no money, placed all things as they were, forgetting that twelve hours' drying would show the marks of his wet fingers, and thus expose his guilt. Sin always leaves its mark, and it cannot be covered, except by the blood of Jesus.

## **Flowers.**

There are numbers of nice definitions of flowers, which suggest spiritual thought and lessons, as "Mercies scattered by a Father's hand," "Childhood's Companions," "God's toys for the children of the poor," "The smiles of God's goodness," "Unconscious witnesses to the Resurrection," "Silent preachers teaching us to look up with gratitude," and "Emblems of Jesus, the Rose of Sharon."



- F** *Famous Flowers*—Beautiful Life—*Song of Sol.*  
ii. 1.  
**L** *Living Flowers*—Active Life—*Matt.* vi. 28, 29  
**O** *Open Flowers*—Testifying Life—*Is.* xxxv. 1, 2.  
**W** *White Flowers*—Pure Life—*Luke* xii. 27.  
**E** *Everlasting Flowers*—Eternal Life—*Song of Sol.* ii. 11, 12.  
**R** *Real Flowers*—Real Life—*Hos.* xiv. 5.  
**S** *Scented Flowers*—Fragrant Life—*Song of Sol.*  
i. 12; iv. 13, 14.

Flowers speak to us of Love, Purity, and Grace, and are striking pictures of Christ and His grace.

The life of flowers is Bright, Brief, and Beautiful; in their brevity a lesson for man (*Job* xiv. 2).

There are artificial flowers and real flowers, so there are sham lives and real lives; may we be the real ones. Scented flowers make the world sweet, so fragrant Christians make the world pure.

A certain shop window in London was filled with nicely arranged artificial flowers; all looked so beautiful and life-like that it was easy to mistake them for living ones. Somewhere in the crowd of roses they had put a *real one*, and placed a notice in the window to this effect—*Find the real one*, but it was most difficult to find it. The true Christian should be more easy to find.



One of Tennyson's visitors once ventured to ask him what he thought of Jesus Christ. They were walking in the garden, and for a minute Tennyson said nothing, then he stopped by some beautiful flower, and said simply, "What the sun is to that flower, Jesus Christ is to my soul. He is the Sun of my soul." This delightful testimony is in perfect unison with the first verse of his great poem :

"Strong Son of God, Immortal Love,  
Whom we that have not seen Thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove."

## Fruits.

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Fruit is the perfection of life, the reward of labour, and the cause of joy. The fruit of the Spirit is love, and the fruit of grace is glory. If grace, then glory ; more grace, more glory ; but no grace, no glory.

**F** *First Fruits*—The Earnest of life—*Rom.* viii. 23.

**R** *Ripe Fruits*—The Joy of life—*Gal.* v. 22.

**U** *Useful Fruits*—The Blessing of life—*Prov.* ii. 30.

**I** *Increasing Fruits*—The Healthy life—*Ezek.* xxxvi. 30.

**T** *Timely Fruits*—The Seasonable life—*Amos* viii. 1.

**S** *Sweet Fruits*—The Happy life—*Song of Sol.* ii. 3.



First fruits belong to God, first thoughts, first words, and first service, for thanksgiving and for praise.

Ripe fruit is the perfection of life. So saints are perfected in grace for glory.

Life is a tree of sap, leaves, blossom, and fruit for God.

The measure is fruit, more fruit, much fruit, and abiding fruit. *John xv.*

Summer fruit, fruit in its season, faith to trust, patience to suffer, and love to labour.

### **“Follow that which is Good.”**

*1 Thess. v. 15.*

This chapter is full of precious golden rules for the followers of Jesus. “Rejoice evermore,” “Pray without ceasing,” “In everything give thanks.” There are two great commands in the New Testament—“*Come to Me*,” “*Follow Me*,” the loving words of Jesus, both to the sinner and the saint. We should always remember the three *F*'s—“*Flee*,” “*Follow*,” “*Fight*,” a short summary of the believer's life. We are to be “Followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” (*Heb. vi. 12.*) Three commands are specially important for our Christian Tiny Folks—“Cleave to that which is good” (*Rom. xii. 9*); “Follow that which is good” (*1 Thess. v. 15*); and “Hold fast that which is good.” *1 Thess. v. 21.*



"Follow that which is good."

1. **Follow the Good Shepherd** for Safety. *John*  
x. 27.
2. **Follow the Good Word** for Instruction. *Heb.*  
vi. 5.
3. **Follow the Good Company** for Society. *Num.*  
x. 29.
4. **Follow the Good Way** for Peace. *Jer.* vi. 16.
5. **Follow the Good Leader** for Guidance. *John*  
xxi. 22.

Dr. J. Hamilton says, "Goodness is love in action, love with its hand at the plough, love with the burden on its back. It is love carrying medicine to the sick, and food to the famished. It is love reading the Bible to the blind, and explaining the Gospel to the prisoner in his cell. It is love at the Sunday School class or in the ragged school. But whatever task it undertakes it is still the same, love following His footsteps, Who went about doing good."

### **Garden of the Lord.**

*Isaiah* li. 3.

"And He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord." This was a real, definite, precious promise to Israel, to those who sought, followed, and obeyed the Lord, and such is the Lord's promise to all, who in like manner trust Him. He will make



our hearts and lives "The Garden of the Lord." If this is to be our experience whether we are adults or children, five things must be done.

**1. There are weeds to be removed. Nature.**

Sin, selfishness, falsehood, and disobedience are all weeds. But Jesus can take them all away. Ask Him!—*1 John i. 7.*

**2. There is life to be nourished. Grace.**

Life must first be put into the garden, and then nourished. The seed sown, watered, and cared for. Life must first be put in the heart by the Holy Spirit and then nourished by the Word. Jesus is the Life — *1 John v. 11, 12.*

**3. There are flowers to be cultivated. Beauty.**

Flowers are earth's ornaments of brightness and joy. So are the virtues of the Christian life—humility, meekness, kindness, and charity.—*Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.*

**4. There are fruits to be gathered. Blessing.**

Fruit is the evidence of life, and the end of toil and labour. So the fruit of grace in the heart is love, joy, peace, etc.—*Gal. v. 22.*

**5. There are blessings to be enjoyed. Reward.**

The joy of possession, the interests of life and growth, fellowship in work, and the gladness of fruit and reward. An earnest, happy Christian life gives joy to God.—(*Zeph. iii. 17*). God is the Owner, the Planter, the Gardener, and will enjoy the fruits of His own love for ever, and



we are allowed to share the joy and glory with Him.

### **\*\* Heaps upon Heaps.\*\***

The Heaps in Scripture are Monuments of Sin and Selfishness, Sympathy and Service, Shame and Sorrow. Note :—

1. **The Heap of Stones.** A Witness of Sin. Connected with Jealousy, Covetousness, and Sin. 2 *Sam.* xviii. 17 ; *Gen.* xxxi. 52 ; *Josh.* vii. 26.  
The Prison, Asylum, and Cemetery are Witnesses of Sin.
2. **The Heap of Riches.** A Witness of Selfishness, Disappointment, Loss, and Shame. *Job* xxvii. 16 ; *Ps.* xxxix. 6 ; *James* v. 3.
3. **The Heap of Coals.** A Witness of Sympathy and Love. "Overcoming evil with good." *Prov.* xxv. 21, 22 ; *Rom.* xii. 20.
4. **The Heap of Treasure.** A Witness of Service, Consecration, Service, and Praise. 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 6, 7, 8.
5. **The Heap of Wrath.** A Witness of Sorrow. A dreadful banking account : "Wrath to Come." *Eccles.* ii. 26 ; *Rom.* ii. 5.

"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 *Thess.* v. 9.



## **Imitate the Lord Jesus.**

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1 *Peter* ii. 21.

The Lord Jesus is a Saviour to trust, a Pattern to follow, a Friend to love, and a Master to serve. These are three steep steps for *Tiny Folks*. Do well, suffer for it, and be patient. Only Jesus can help us do this. This verse shows us Jesus as our Pattern. Example is better than precept. The Lord Jesus is our

1. **Example** of Love and Sympathy. Perfect Saviour.
2. **Example** of Loyalty and Obedience. Perfect Man.
3. **Example** of Life and Service. Perfect Servant.

One writer reminds us that in order to follow Jesus fully we must tread in *His steps*, and for this we need *His nature*, *His spirit*, and *His power*, but this threefold grace is given to all who will sincerely follow Him.

Two persons were walking together one very dark night, when one said to the other, who knew the road well, "I shall follow you so as to be right." He soon fell into a ditch, and accused the other with his fall. The other replied, "Then you did not follow me *exactly*; for I have kept free." A side step had caused the fall. There is like danger in following Christ. Let us follow Him fully.



## **Inquire for the Old Paths.**

*Jer. vi. 16.*

Things that are New are not always true, but things that are true are always New. The way of life, the path to heaven, and the good old way of grace, is always new, because always true. Whatever bears the stamp of antiquity upon it, finds a favourable reception with most people. The Gospel in this sense claims special acceptance. It is as old as the need of man, nay, as old as the grace of God. "The old, old story of Jesus and His love." And the Lord by His Prophet tells us to "Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way," etc. That is, stop and think, look and believe, ask and act, and He will lead you right. Note—

1. **The Position.** "Stand ye in the ways, see and ask."
2. **The Path.** "The old paths."
3. **The Progress.** "And walk therein."
4. **The Promise.** "And ye shall find rest for your souls."

"My dear grandfather, after having preached the Gospel sixty-three years in one place, came to die; and as one of my uncles stood by his bedside he quoted that hymn, "Firm as the earth Thy Gospel stands." Said he, 'James, I do not like Dr. Watt's saying, "Firm as the earth."



Why the earth is slipping away under my feet even now. James, I want something firmer than the earth now; I like the doctor better when he sings, "Firm as His throne His promise stands." Ah, that is it; we want something as firm as the throne of God.'"—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

### **Knock at Mercy's Door.**

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*1 Thess. v. 17.*

"Pray without ceasing" is a Divine precept, and constant need requires constant help. *Asking, Seeking, and Knocking* are three special features of real prayer. Asking is the simplicity of prayer, Seeking is the earnestness of prayer, and Knocking is the importunity of prayer. Prayer should be the key of the day, and the lock of the night. "Knock and it shall be opened unto you," is the promise of the Lord Jesus Himself. There are three *Knocks* all our Tiny Folks should avoid—

The Timid Knock. Want of faith. *James i. 6.*

The Runaway Knock. Want of Patience. *Ps. xl. 1.*

The Late Knock. Want of Time. *Luke xiii. 25.*

There are five proper ways of Knocking—

1. **Knock Early.** Whilst you are young. *Ps. v. 3.*

2. **Knock Earnestly.** With all your heart. *James v. 17, 18.*



3. **Knock Distinctly.** With simple words. *Matt.* vii. 7.
4. **Knock Repeatedly.** With importunity. *I Thess.* v. 17.
5. **Knock Expectantly.** With patient waiting. *Ps.* xxvii. 14.

A little girl, about four years of age, being asked, "Why do you pray to God?" replied, "Because I know He hears me, and I love to pray to Him." "But how do you know He hears you?" was the further inquiry. Putting her little hand to her heart, she said, "I know He does, because there is *something here* that tells me so."

### **Little Things.**

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The Lord is pleased to use little things, and through very weak instruments He shows His mighty power, and almost all little things are useful. Mr. Spurgeon says, "Little chips light great fires," "Little pigeons carry great messages," and "Little pitchers can do great service."

1. **It was only a little coat.** But what love it expressed! (*1 Sam.* ii. 19.) "Moreover, his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year." What happy times for little Samuel when his mother fitted on his new coat every year! The little coat was the ex-



pression of the mother's love—*thinking, working, and blessing.*

"What is so pure, so good, so fair, so like the realms above,  
Within this frail and mortal world, as tender mother's love."

There is only one thing purer and greater, and that is God's great love.

2. **It was only a little cake.** But what blessings it brought! (1 *Kings* xvii. 13.) "But make me a little cake first, and bring it to me, and after make for thee and for thy son." This is not selfishness, but faith. Elijah represented God, and he put God first. This was a cake full of plums of blessing, food and supply for "many days" (v. 15). God's promises are like this little cake, full of blessing and sweetness

3. **It was only a little cloud.** But what hopes it revived! (1 *Kings* xviii. 44.) "Behold there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand." Prayer shut the heavens, and prayer opened them again. Oh, the mighty power of prayer; it will always turn a little cloud into a big blessing. It is recorded that in a time of great drought in Scotland, Dr. Guthrie had in his Sabbath morning service special prayer for rain. As they went to church in the afternoon, little Mary, his daughter, said, "Here is the umbrella, father." "What do we need it for?" he asked. "You prayed for rain this morning, and don't you expect God will send it?" They carried the umbrella, and when they came home



they were glad to take shelter under it from the drenching storm.

4. **It was only a little coney.** But what wisdom it displayed! "The conies are but feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rock." (*Prov.* xxx. 26.) Wise little builders, building their homes at the right time, the right place, and for the right purpose—for shelter, safety. *Matt.* vii. 24, 25.

5. **It was only a little child.** But what good service she rendered! "A little maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife." (*2 Kings* v. 2.) She had kind thoughts, earnest words, a bright testimony, and did happy service. See verses 3, 4, and 14. The lessons from these little folks are all pointed and practical. Be thankful. Be trustful. Be hopeful. Be thoughtful. Be truthful.

### ***Little Ships.***

"And there were also with Him other little ships."  
*Mark* iv. 36.

We are not told that these little ships crossed the sea to the other side. If they did, they would have to face the storm, which came suddenly upon the sea that night, but they would also share in the calm and peace that the Saviour spoke. It does say, "There were also *with Him* other little ships." Linked with Him, and all is well.



The larger ship, in which the Saviour and His disciples were, supplies us with a very striking illustration of the Church preserved and guided by Jesus, and "the other little ships" may be taken as a picture of the children under the love and protection of Christ.

These "little ships" suggest a few solemn thoughts about individual responsibility. We need to be watchful, careful, and prayerful, or the storms of life will overcome us.

**I. Little Ships Carry Precious Cargo.** Little ships carry both treasure and life: so do little folks. The soul with all its precious powers. The mind to know the Lord. The conscience to feel the Lord. The heart to love the Lord, and the memory to remember Him. This treasure is of more value than the whole world. *Mark* viii. 36, 37.

Jesus knows the soul's value, and gave His life to redeem it; not silver nor gold, but His own precious blood. *1 Peter* i. 19.

Souls are claimed by the Lord. (*Ezekiel* xviii. 4.) Bought with a price. (*1 Cor.* vi. 20.) Saved by faith. (*Heb.* x. 39.) Filled with love and life. (*Romans* v. 5.) And then sealed and marked as the Lord's precious treasure until the day of redemption. *Eph.* i. 13, 14.

The soul within us is the most precious thing in the world, more precious than gold, or bank-notes, or anything of that kind.



When the *Central America* was foundering at sea, bags and purses of gold were strewn about the deck, as worthless—as the merest rubbish. Some of the survivors cried for “Water, water!” “Bread, bread!” which were worth their weight in gold, if they could have been bought. All wanted LIFE. “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

**2. Little Ships Need Guiding.** These little ships would require a great deal of managing on the sea that night, for a great storm broke upon them, and if not guided well they would have gone to pieces. And on the sea of life there are storms, rocks, and quicksands, and dangers of every description. There is sin, selfishness, forgetfulness of God, and fatal indifference, all of which will sink the soul, if they are not overcome, and only Jesus can save us from our sins. *Acts* iv. 12; *Matthew* i. 21.

Every ship, small or great, requires a captain, chart, cable and compass, if it is to cross in safety over the wide ocean. So every person, young or old, needs a sure Guide to steer him to the harbour of eternal rest, and all is provided for by Divine grace. *Psalms* cvii. 7.

The Lord Jesus is the Captain, and He will guide us safely. *Hebrews* ii. 10.

The Bible is the Chart, and that will direct us right. *Psalms* cxix. 105.



Faith is the Cable, and that will hold us firmly.  
*Acts* xxvii. 25 ; *Acts* xxvii. 44.

The Holy Spirit is the Compass, and He is always true. *John* xvi. 14.

The pilot guides the vessel out of the harbour, and past all the dangerous rocks and shoals, and only when she is safe in the deep ocean, does he leave her in charge of the captain, who is well acquainted with the ocean, and is capable of taking her safely to the other side. So it is the duty of parents, teachers, and preachers to steer the children safely past all the dangers of youth, to the great Captain of our Salvation.

**3. Little Ships can be Useful.** They often do more business, in proportion, than larger ones, because more easily managed. And how very useful little people can be, if they have the right spirit.

Think of little Samuel lighting the lamps, and opening the doors in the Temple, how useful to Eli the Priest.

Think of the little maid who told Naaman of the prophet Elisha in Israel, how useful she was to Naaman.

Think of the little lad with the loaves and fishes, and who willingly gave them up to Jesus, how useful he was to the crowd of people, who were fainting for the want of food.

But to be useful, like these little folks, we need the same grace. We must hear the Lord, like



Samuel. (1 *Samuel* iii. 10). We must know the Lord, like the little maid. (2 *Kings* v. 3). And we must follow Jesus, like the lad with the loaves and fishes. (*John* vi. 9). Yes, to hear Jesus, to know Jesus, and to follow Jesus, is the fitness for His service, and the way to be useful. *John* v. 24; *John* ix. 25; *Mark* i. 17, 18.

A little boy once said to his mother, "I should like to have lived in the time of our Saviour, that I might have done something for Him." His mother replied, smiling, "Why, what could a child of your age have done to prove your love to Him?" "I would have run errands for Him," answered the boy. Saved children can do that for Jesus now.

**4. Little Ships must be Careful.** All who manage ships have to be careful, because there are so many dangers, and certain rules and regulations must be observed, or disaster will overtake them; therefore, all who are responsible, must be acquainted with the rules for sailing, the lights of warning, and the flags of communication. So, in the great voyage of life, there are rules to observe, warnings to note, and lights to follow, or we shall go wrong. It means for us, that we, with every care—

Read the *chart*, that is, the Bible. *John* v. 39; *Isaiah* xxxiv. 16.

Attend to the *Compass*, that is, the Holy Spirit. *John* xvi. 13; xiv. 26.



Watch the *lights*, that is, warnings. *Deut.* vi. 12 ; 2 *Peter* iii. 17.

Observe the *flags*, that is, rules for service. *Luke* i. 74 ; 1 *Thess.* i. 9 ; *Heb.* xii. 28.

Obey the *Captain*, that is, Jesus. *Romans* vi. 16 ; *Hebrews* v. 9.

Keep the *lights burning*, that is, testimony. *Matt.* v. 16 ; *Phil.* ii. 15, 16.

“ Mark well the chart, watch unto prayer,  
For danger lurks in the sunniest sea ;  
Of hidden peril do thou beware,  
Lest the barque be wrecked eternally.”

A country lad, who was leaving his Sunday school and home to go up to London to take a situation there, was accompanied to his starting-place by a Christian friend, who kindly said to him, “ Now, my boy, recollect you are going to launch your craft on a dangerous ocean.” “ Yes, I know it,” said the boy ; and taking a Bible out of his pocket and holding it up, he added, “ But you see I have got a safe chart to steer by.”

**5. Little Ships may be Lost.** Ships of all kinds may be lost, through leakage, fire or collision, rocks or storms, and sink with all hands on board ; and oh, how sad the loss. The vessel, the treasure, the lives all gone, to be recovered no more in this world ; and if the owners are not insured, it means bankruptcy and ruin. And how true this is with regard to our lives, both old and young. Sin may overcome us ; Satan may overturn us ; the world may overwhelm us,

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and our own evil hearts deceive us, and we may be lost. As with the ship, so with ourselves. Ignorance, carelessness, or neglect may lose us everything, and what a loss! The soul lost; life lost; salvation lost, and heaven lost. Oh, how sad the thought of being lost!

Let us cry to Jesus as the disciples did. *Mark* iv. 38.

Let us take Him into the vessel at once. *Mark* iv. 36.

Let us insure our treasure by faith in Christ. *2 Tim.* i. 12.

Let us do it at once, then we are safe. *2 Cor.* vi. 2.

Then we never can be lost, because Jesus lives. *John* xiv. 19; x. 28.

One dark wild night, in the month of October, 1863, two men and a boy were clinging to the rigging of a stranded vessel off the city of Toronto. They had lashed themselves to the vessel to keep from being washed overboard by the heavy swells that every moment broke entirely over them. Amid the darkness of the night, and the fury of the tempest, *Death* came riding on the billows and took the spirit of one from its tenement of clay. He was the captain's son, a boy of fourteen years. Just before he died, he said to his father, "Father, are you afraid to die? I am not, and oh, I know I shall die, I am so cold." Then his spirit passed away to be with Christ.



Children, are you ready if death should come to you? If not, let the Captain, the Lord Jesus, come on board your soul, and then He shall save and guide you.

### ***Lessons from the Leaves.***

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Spiritual truths are beautifully illustrated in the book of nature, and both the animal and vegetable kingdom are full of interesting pictures of the life, growth, beauty, and perfection of grace in the soul. And we have a striking symbol of the Christian life in *Bible Leaves*. There is the Fig leaf of Failure (*Gen.* iii. 7), the Olive leaf of Hope (*Gen.* viii. 11), the Green leaf of Testimony (*Psa.* i. 3), the Fading leaf of Death (*Psa.* lxiv. 6), and the Healing leaf of Heaven (*Rev.* xxii. 2); but these Bible leaves suggest also the different aspects of our Christian life and service, its *germ, growth, gracefulness, and glory*. We can take the leaf in its progressive stages of growth and usefulness as a guide to our spiritual development.

1. **First Leaves.**—The evidence of new *life*. The gift of God both in nature and grace. *Matt.* xxiv. 32; *2 Cor.* v. 17.
2. **Fresh Leaves.**—The mark of progressive *life*. The power of God in nature and grace. *Jer.* xvii. 8; *2 Peter* iii. 18.



3. **Fixed Leaves.**—The symbol of preserved *life*.  
The preservation of God both in nature and grace. *Gen.* viii. 11 ; *Jude* i.
4. **Full Leaves.**—The picture of perfected *life*,  
The goodness of God both in nature and grace. *Ps.* i. 3 ; *Peter* v. 10.
5. **Fading Leaves.**—The end of useful *life*. The  
faithfulness of God both in nature and grace.  
*Is.* lxiv. 6 ; *Heb.* xi. 13 ; *Rev.* xiv. 13.

The leaf on the tree is the evidence of its life, the guide to its health, the measure of its vigour, the lungs of its being, the beauty of its growth, the shade for its fruit, and the reflection of its glory. Such is the active life, grace, and testimony of Christians. They are "Trees of Righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified." *Isaiah* lxi. 3.

Reynolds says : "The Tree of Life, its branches, leaves, and fruit, represents Christ planted in our life : rooted in the ground of our faith, growing erect towards heaven in our worship, branching out in our manifold duties on every side. The breathing, living leaves are as our clothing of righteousness, of love, with sweet, dispersive, refreshing fragrance everywhere. The fruit is that holiness to God and use to man which heavenward obtains acceptance, and earthward is blessed to every creature."



Many of the Lord's saints have lived for God, reflected the light, finished their work, and then, like the golden Autumn leaves, faded away full of glory, leaving a grand testimony to the power of the Lord's saving and sanctifying grace. Mr. Wesley said. "The best of all, God is with us." Mr. B. Abbott, "Glory to God! I see heaven sweetly opening before me!" "I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness." "Satisfied, satisfied," were the last words of Mr. Charles Wesley. May our dying testimony be bright and golden, like the Autumn leaves!

### **Letters of Love and Life.**

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A letter is, "Coin from the brain's mint for private circulation." "A speaking-trumpet, through which the voice may be heard at any distance."

"What is a letter? Let affection tell!  
A tongue that speaks for those who absent dwell;  
A silent language utter'd to the eye,  
Which envious distance would in vain deny;  
A link to bind where circumstances part;  
A nerve of feeling stretch'd from heart to heart."

CRABBE.

The Bible is a bundle of precious letters from our God in heaven to men on earth, full of good news, tidings of love and promises of blessing. The Bible is—

1. **A Letter of Light.** Revealing the Truth.  
*John xvii. 17; Ps. cxix. 130.*



The truth about God, Man, Sin, Life, Death, and Eternity.

2. **A Letter of Love.** With tidings of Grace.  
1 *John* iv. 8; *John* iii. 16; *Rom.* v. 5.

In its Source, Manifestation, and Power.

3. **A Letter of Life.** Seeking the Lost. *John* v. 24; *John* xx. 31.

Written, Addressed, and Sent after the perishing.

4. **A Letter of Leading.** Guiding to Life and Service. *Isaiah* viii. 20; 2 *Tim.* iii. 17;  
1 *John* v. 13.

The Chart for Life, the Light for Testimony, and the Guide for Service.

5. **A Letter of Lustre.** Reflecting the Glory.  
2 *Cor.* iii. 18; *Luke* xxiv. 27; *John* v. 39.

A mirror, in which we see Jesus, Heaven, and Glory.

Bible letters are written by the Holy Ghost, sent from the God of love, addressed to "Who-soever," stamped with the Divine seal, and bring the good news of eternal life through Jesus, for every creature, and he that believeth shall be saved.

### **Mile Stones on the Journey of Life.**

With inscriptions for Pilgrims—so that "he may run that readeth."—*Hab.* ii. 2.

1. **The Stone Preacher.** (1 *Sam.* vii. 12.) Be Thankful for past mercies.



2. **The Stone Memorial.** (*Josh.* iv. 7). Be thoughtful for great deliverances.
3. **The Stone Altar.** (*Ex.* xx. 25). Be Careful with special instructions.
4. **The Stone Teacher.** (*Josh.* viii. 32). Be Obedient to solemn lessons.
5. **The Stone Pillar.** (*Gen.* xxviii. 18). Be Trustful for all things.
6. **The Stone Witness.** (*Josh.* xxiv. 27). Be Faithful to all your promises.
7. **The Stone Testimony.** (*1 Kings* xviii. 32). Be Decided for God and the right.

A careful inspection of these Way Marks for Wanderers, or Mile Stones of Guidance, will help us in our Life, Testimony, and Service for the Lord Jesus Christ all through our Pilgrimage, and the path may end in glory before the year is out. Let us then be *real*, *earnest*, and *busy* till the Lord appears.

### **Now. Now. Now.**

2 *Cor.* vi. 2.

The Lord puts His special notice word in this verse, *Behold*, to show us the importance of the message, "Behold now is the accepted time, Behold now is the day of salvation." The greatest word in the Bible is *God*, the sweetest *Love*, the tenderest *Come*, the longest *Eternity*, and the shortest *Now*. Yet what momentous issues



depend upon the proper use of the present moment, *Now* or *Never*.

1. **Now is God's Time**—for Mercy. *Luke* xiv. 17.
2. **Now is a Good Time**—for Salvation. *2 Kings* vii. 9.
3. **Now is the Right Time**—for Watchfulness. *Rom.* xiii. 11.
4. **Now is the Best Time**—for Acceptance. *2 Cor.* vi. 2.
5. **Now is the Only Time**—for Blessing. *Luke* xix. 42.

Now in this present world, not in that to come. Now is the present moment. We know not what a day may bring forth. Now for the old, Now for the young, and Now for all. When the old Romans attacked a city, it was sometimes their custom to set up a white flag at the city gate. If the garrison surrendered while the white flag was up, their lives were spared ; after that, the black flag was run up, and every man was put to the sword. Sinner, to-day the white flag of mercy is out. Surrender to Christ, and live, before the black flag of death and doom takes its place.

### **Obey the Lord's Word.**

*Psalm* cxix. 11.

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." This verse has



been divided as follows : The right thing, in the right place, for the right purpose. It is real heart obedience to His word that the Lord delights in, because the heart is the great seat of the affections, and, like the main spring of the watch, if that is all right all goes well. Love is obedience in the heart, obedience is Love in the life. True obedience springs from love to God, union with Christ, the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the power of the Word. Hope and Fear are the upper and nether Millstones for preparing the soul for spiritual obedience. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee" (*Ps. lvi. 3*). Let us obey the Lord's word.

1. **As the Word of Warning.** (*Matt. vii. 26*).

*Beware.*

2. **As the Word of Wisdom.** *2 Tim. iii. 15.*

*Be wise.*

3. **As the Word of Welcome.** (*John vi. 37*).

*Believe.*

(*Matt. ii. 28*).

Obedience to the Lord's word is the high road to present happiness and eternal life. The man who obeys the laws of God "shall feel no evil thing." (*Eccl. viii. 5*). (Bowes). The negro said if God bade him go through a wall, whether he could go through or not was no business of his. "Here I go," said he, "right at it." We have to obey the precept, and leave the consequences. If God says "Do it" the command is the warrant for our act, and God will make all things clear.



### **Our Little Ones.**

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It is a matter of the greatest interest to notice the important place the little ones have always occupied in the history, experience, and service of the Lord's people, and a great comfort also to see, by the Bible, the special place they have in the purposes, plans, and provisions of the Lord's grace. They have a unique place in His heart of love, His covenant of grace, His redemption work, His kingdom of blessing, and His eternal home. And who can measure or describe the important part the little ones play in human hearts and homes. They are indeed what Mr. Binney called them, "The poetry of the world, the fresh flowers of the family. Little conjurors, with their natural magic, evoking by their spells what delights and enriches all ranks of society, and although they bring with them anxieties and cares, and live to occasion sorrow and grief, we should get on very badly without them." Seeing, then, that the little ones fill such an important place both in the heart of God and man, it is right they should always have a very prominent place too in the ministry of the Word, and in all our prayers; thus we should seek in every way to obey the Master in feeding the lambs. A little boy, one Saturday night, said at the end of his prayer, "O God, let the minister say something to-morrow that I can understand." The Lord help us to answer this prayer at every service.



The Bible marks very clearly, special care for the little ones at different points of varied experiences, and supplies innumerable illustrations of this special love. They are reckoned in love ; redeemed by grace ; registered with care ; remembered in life ; and represented above..

These are the thoughts we wish to fix on our minds :—

**I. Little ones reckoned in love.** “ Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go : that we may live and not die, both we and thou, and also our little ones ” (*Gen.* xliii. 8). In this verse we have an ancient light to this wonderful love. There is the picture of need, the reckoning of love, the link of life, and the hope of help. Yes. It was love which linked the little ones with the families of Israel in their need, hope, and help. So Divine love has linked all the little ones with the great redemption which is in Christ Jesus. They have all been reckoned in His heart of love, His covenant of peace, and His purposes of mercy. It is everlasting love. It had no birthday, it has no changing day, and it will have no dying day. Abundant, free, eternal love, and the gift of this love is Jesus, the Light of Life, and the Bread of Life for every soul, for fathers, mothers, and little ones too. Jesus says, “ I am the Bread of Life, he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst ” (*John* vi. 35). Let us try and get this thought into the hearts of the little ones, that God loves



them with an everlasting love. "Oh, mother," said a little girl on returning from church to her sick parent, "I have heard *the child's Gospel to-day*, 'God is Love.'"

**2. Little ones redeemed by Grace.** "Let your little ones also go with you" (*Ex.* x. 10, 24). Pharaoh at first wanted to keep the little ones in Egypt, and only allow the men to go, but Moses said, no, all must go. "Not an hoof be left behind." The Lord sent plagues, Pharaoh's heart was softened, and then he said, "Go ye and serve the Lord . . . let your little ones also go with you" (*Ex.* x. 24). So *all* were separated from Egypt by grace, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (*Ex.* xii. 13); and delivered by Divine power from the bitter bondage of slavery to sing the new song on the other side of the Red Sea, a free, happy people. This is a picture of the redemption we have in Christ Jesus (*Eph.* i. 7), from the bondage of sin, the power of Satan, and the evil of the world, thus every saved one can sing the new song of praise to our God. And the power and promise of this redeeming grace reaches to all the little ones. Peter said at Pentecost, "For the promise is unto you and to your children" (*Acts* ii. 39); and Paul said to the jailor, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (*Acts* xvi. 31). We can tell the story of the Lord's redeeming grace to all the little ones, for they are all included in the Gospel provision,



invitation, and promise. A friend of mine was holding services on Margate Sands in 1888. Two young friends, aged about nine and eleven, wrote him saying, "We were so unhappy when we left the meeting, but before we got home we both knelt down in a dark corner, in the High Street, and told Jesus all. We are so happy now." A memorable spot, upon which no tablet has been erected, but heaven will register the deed.

**3. Little ones registered with care** (*2 Chron.* xxxi. 18). The Israelites were very careful about registering their children, and no wonder, for so much depended upon it. The covenant blessings, their fitness for service, and their title to the inheritance, all were affected by their registration. And the registry of the birth and names of our children is also important and imperative, and every good citizen understands the wisdom of this. But there is another register which is the most important of all, and that is to have our names written in the Lamb's book of life. And it is a great joy to know that all our little ones who are saved by grace are registered in heaven. The Lord counts His people (*Ps.* lxxxvii. 6); registers His people (*Luke* x. 20); keeps His people (*Ps.* cxxi. 5); seals His people (*Eph.* i. 13), and it is most cheering for every Sunday School teacher to note in *Matthew* xviii. how sweetly Jesus has linked all the little ones who "believe on Him" with His Father in heaven,



His kingdom of grace, His own name of power, and His eternal glory. There is a faithful record kept in heaven of every little one who is washed in the Saviour's blood, and nothing can possibly sever this bond of love and life in Christ Jesus. Oh, happy thought! The great family register is filling up, and what joy it will be to gather there in the Father's home. Mr. Spurgeon says, "Some have doubted whether there will be recognition in heaven. There is no room for doubt, for it is called 'My Father's house,' and shall not the family be known to each other? Let us seek to get the Home filled."

4. **Little ones remembered in life.** "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (*Matt.* xviii. 14). How loving, kind, and tender Jesus was towards children when He was on earth. "He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them" (*Mark* x. 16). He is just the same now He is up in heaven, full of love, full of sympathy, and full of interest in all the little ones. This one verse gives us God's estimate of love and longing for the children, and in different parts of the Word the Lord has instructed us how to treat them. We are to love them, help them, guide them, and bring them to Jesus for life and blessing; and the great secret of successful Sunday School teaching is, to be in harmony with the Divine will for the salvation of the



children, that not one little one may perish. In the Gospel of Matthew, alone, the Lord Jesus has given us clear, definite counsel in our care for the children. We are to remember their value (*Matt.* xviii. 10); bring them to Him for blessing (*Matt.* xix. 13, 14); rejoice at their conversion (*Matt.* xviii. 14); receive them in love (*Matt.* xviii. 5); be glad with their service (*Matt.* xxi. 15, 16); refresh them with sympathy (*Matt.* x. 42); and come down to their simplicity (*Matt.* xviii. 4). This guiding light from the Master Himself, shows us His tender love and abiding affection for the little ones. Let us follow the Good Shepherd in this happy service for the lambs. In this precious verse we have a three-fold cord of love, which seems to surround the little ones. The Father's will; the Saviour's love; and the Holy Spirit's word. This threefold grace and power gives us the assurance of their safety.

**5. Little ones represented above.** "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," etc. (*Matt.* xviii. 10). It is a pleasing fact that the Lord Jesus bears all the little ones "who believe on Him," on His heart before His Father in heaven, and they enjoy all the blessings of His loving intercession just as much as older Christians do. But there is another pleasing fact which Jesus Himself has revealed, that the angels, who are in the very presence of God, are deputed to guard, guide, and help all the little



ones at every step of their tender experience, "For I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven" (*v.* 10). So we know that all the little ones who trust Jesus are saved, shielded, and secured in the fold of His love. Yes; the ministry of angels is a very real blessing. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (*Heb.* i. 14). Oh, how safe our little ones are who are trusting Jesus. They are always on the Saviour's heart, in the Church's care, in the angels' hands, in the book of life, and soon they will all be in our Father's home. Let us earnestly seek to win them for Jesus. This verse supplies every teacher with four precious thoughts. We have a warning of love; a window of life; a wonder of grace; and a welcome of home, or a ladder of love, like Jacob's, which reaches from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending upon it.

### Prayer.

One of the greatest comforts and joys in this world is Prayer. It is the real Telephone of love, Telegraph of faith, and Cablegram of hope. Prayer is the silence of the soul, the desire of the heart, and the union of our wills with the Divine. Prayer is the magnet which draws Christians together with one accord (*Acts* i. 14);



Prayer is a link of fellowship which binds them together (*Acts* iv. 44); and Prayer is the Key of Power opening every door of blessing.

“Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Utter'd or unexpress'd ;  
The motion of a hidden fire,  
That trembles in the breast.”

But placing the letters of the word Prayer as an acrostic, thus—P R A Y E R, we get a suggestion of real Prayer.

**P** *Pleading God's love.* *Matt.* vi. 8 to 12.

**R** *Requesting God's mercy.* *Luke* xviii. 13.

**A** *Asking God's favour.* *Matt.* vii. 7.

**Y** *Yielding to God's will.* *Matt.* vi. 10; xxvi. 39.

**E** *Enquiring God's mind.* *James* i. 5.

**R** *Receiving God's blessing.* *Matt.* vii. 8.

“Prayer is the key of the morning, and the lock of night.” Prayer is the gift of the knees. A letter sent from a child on earth to his Father “in Heaven.” “When God pours out His Spirit upon men, then man will pour out his heart before God. The breath of prayer comes from the life of faith.”

## Rhoda.

*Acts* xii. 13, 16.

Rhoda and Miriam are the only two girls of the Bible whose names we know. Rhoda was evidently an earnest Christian, and occupies an

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important place in the records of the early Church. The mention of her name, the memorial of her life, and the fragrance of her service, are abiding marks of her precious testimony for Jesus. Rhoda means a rose, the emblem of beauty, sweetness and fragrance, and these certainly were some of the features of Rhoda's character.

On a girl's tombstone in France, there is a rose nicely carved upon it, with these words underneath: "She was just like that." And this is the picture the Holy Spirit has drawn of Rhoda in the New Testament. A bright, beautiful blessing, "She being dead yet speaketh."

1. **Rhoda was a true Christian.** But you ask, How do you know? She was in fellowship with the Church. The Lord only added living souls (*Acts* ii. 47). She was interested in the prayer-meeting—prayer, the evidence of life (*Acts* ix. 11). She was glad when Peter was released; Christian love a family mark; grace, life, and fellowship, all true marks of a real Christian.

2. **Rhoda was a careful Christian.** She was placed on guard. No doubt she was set to watch and listen by the Church whilst they prayed. There were many enemies about (*Acts* xii. 1). She used her ears well. She hearkened carefully (*Mark* xiii. 33). She used her tongue wisely. She asked who was there (margin). She was very quick. She recognised Peter's voice. Grace



makes us wise. Danger makes us careful, and love makes us quick.

3. **Rhoda was a warm-hearted Christian.** "She opened not the gate for gladness." Rhoda got a little excited, still there was real joy. Her whole soul responded to the fact that prayer was answered, and Peter was released. There were three good reasons for Rhoda's gladness. Rewarded faith, answered prayer, and relieved anxiety. These blessings are always means of great joy and happiness (*Acts* v. 41).

4. **Rhoda was an active Christian.** "She ran and told how Peter stood before the gate." She had a quick ear, warm heart, nimble feet, and a ready tongue, all alive for Jesus. The outward evidences of a soul full of the love and joy of Jesus. Just the grace the two disciples had in *Luke* xxiv. 27, 41. If we are not like this, let us breathe that oft-repeated prayer in *Psalms* cxix. 25, "Quicken thou me according to Thy word."

5. **Rhoda was a useful Christian.** She was most useful to the Church *then*, and has been ever since. It was only very humble service, but it has been recognised and recorded by the Holy Spirit. It is a guide and pattern for every follower of Jesus. It was wise, hearty, helpful, happy service for the Lord. So every Christian, young or old, with head clear, heart warm, soul glad, faith strong, feet shod, and the tongue touched by the Holy Ghost, can do wonders for the Church and the world too. The Lord give us the Divine touch.



## Sailing to Glory.

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Life is a voyage; the world is like a sea; salvation in Jesus is a ship of safety; and Heaven is the happy shore where we want to land; but we require a number of good things to ensure a safe and happy passage. Let us see what they are. Besides the *anchor*, which is sure and steadfast, we must have—

1. **A Captain** who is wise. **Jesus.** *Heb.* ii. 10 ;  
*Josh.* v. 14, 15.  
He is wise, 1 *Cor.* i. 24, 30 ; able, *Heb.* vii. 25 ; and experienced, *Heb.* xiii. 8.
2. **A Chart** that is safe. **Bible.** *Ps.* cxix. 9 ; 105.  
It is clear, *Ps.* cxix. 130 ; sure, *Ps.* xix. 7 ; and perfect, *Ps.* xix. 7.
3. **A Compass** which is true. **The Holy Spirit.**  
*John* xvi. 13,  
He marks the path, *John* xiv. 26 ; points to Christ, *John* xvi. 14 ; and guides the ship, *John* ii. 20.
4. **A Cable** that is strong. **Faith.** *Heb.* xi. 1 ;  
*Rom.* i. 17.  
Faith saves, *Eph.* ii. 8 ; faith keeps, 1 *Peter* i. 5 ;  
and faith secures, 2 *Tim.* xii. 1.
5. **A Crew** who are capable. **Teachers.** 2 *Tim.* ii. 15 ; *Eph.* iv. 11, 12.  
Teaching carefully, 1 *Tim.* i. 3 ; continually, *Acts* v. 42 ; and capably, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2.



6. **A Company** who are happy. **Christians.** *Acts* ii. 46, 47.

Saved by grace, *Acts* xi. 23, 24; seeking a better country, *Heb.* xi. 13, 14; and singing God's praises, *Eph.* v. 19; *Col.* iii. 16.

The best place to get the tickets for this wonderful voyage is the Sunday School; the time is now; the price is "without money;" and the booking-office is open at every Gospel meeting.

"We are out on the ocean sailing  
Homeward bound we sweetly glide;  
We are out on the ocean sailing,  
To a home beyond the tide.  
All the storms will soon be over,  
Then we'll anchor in the harbour;  
We are out on the ocean sailing,  
To a home beyond the tide."

**\*\* Seek and ye shall find. \*\***

*Matt.* vii. 7.

There are but three classes of persons; those who have found God and serve Him; those who are seeking Him, to know Him; and those who have neither found Him nor seek Him. But the encouraging promise to every seeker is, "Seek and ye shall find." We may call the above, First class, Second class, and Third class people. To which class do you belong? The promise of the Lord is, "Those that seek me early shall find Me" (*Prov.* viii. 17). Seek the Lord early, in the dawn of life, in the breaking of the day, and in the first opportunities of life. Remember,



as good Mr. Bridges puts it, that "Every day you remain unsaved—you lose a world of happiness; you bind a chain of sin; you take a step to hell." "Seek and ye shall find." In these assuring words we have

<b>A Personal Precept.</b>	"Seek."	Obedience.
<b>A Personal Persuasion.</b>	"And ye."	Response.
<b>A Personal Promise.</b>	"Shall."	Assurance.
<b>A Personal Portion.</b>	"Find."	Blessing.

A little girl, many years ago, living at Skye, became impressed with the idea that God was not in her native isle. She started on pilgrimage to find Him. As soon as she was out of Skye, she began to ask everyone she met how and where she might find God. She reached Inverness in her wanderings. A lady took an interest in her, took her with her to the house of God; she heard the Gospe<sup>l</sup>, found the Lord, and became a bright happy Christian, and lived to serve the Lord many years.

### ***\*\* Show Me a Penny. \*\****

*Luke xx. 24.*

Jesus took every opportunity to teach plain, practical, and important truths. And every familiar object served as a text for His instructive discourses. Jesus said to His enemies, "Show Me a penny;" and when they brought it to Him, He preached a practical sermon from



it. If we take a new penny and look at it carefully, we shall see a number of suggestive lessons upon it. There are—The Image of the Sovereign, Emblems of Life, and Marks of Service.

1. **Image of Sovereign.** An Emblem of Divine life. *2 Cor* iii. 18.
2. **Inscription** ("*Gra. Britt. Regina*"). A Mark of Spiritual life. *Eph.* ii. 8.
3. **Sailing Ship.** A Picture of Business life. *Ps.* civ. 26.
4. **Lighthouse.** An Illustration of Philanthropic life. *Matt.* v. 16.
5. **Britannia.** A Figure of National life. *Acts* xvii. 26.
6. **Date of Penny.** A token of Registered life. *Ps.* lxxxvii. 6.
7. **Value of Penny.** A Symbol of Valued life. *Matt.* vi. 28, 26.

I find the Lighthouse and the Ship are left off the last-made new pennies.

Men make their goods, and then put their trade-mark upon the outside. The Lord saves and recreates His people and marks them inside.

The late Earl Cairns, when he was ten years old, heard a Belfast minister say in his sermon, "God claims you." Those words stuck to the boy, and kept echoing in his soul, "God claims you." He said to himself, "And He has a good



right to claim me. He made me and He cares for me ; and He has sent His son to die for me." And he resolved to yield himself to God at once. His motto to the end was " God claims me."

### **Thank God for all His Mercies.**

" Be careful for nothing."—*Phil.* iv. 6.

This is Heaven's receipt for Christian life on earth. Mr. Moody says, " Our little matters are great to God's love, and our great matters are small to His power." God in all things, then all things in God. In these few verses, from the 4th to 9th, we have something to be glad about, something to pray about, something to think about, something to be busy about, and something to talk about. A good Christian is ever praying or praising : he drives a constant trade betwixt earth and heaven.

1. **Be patient and wait.** " Be careful for nothing."
2. **Be prayerful and trust.** " In everything by prayer."
3. **Be praising and bright.** " With thanksgiving."
4. **Be peaceful and rest.** " And the peace of God."

A sweet little girl met with an accident in the street. She was carried to a doctor ; a very painful operation was declared necessary. When the time came, and the surgeon had taken out his instruments, her father asked her if she was



ready to let the doctor do what he could to cure her. "No, father, not yet," she replied. "What do you wish us to wait for, my child?" "I want to pray to Jesus first," she answered. She prayed, and then afterwards submitted to the operation with all the patience of a strong woman.

### **The Bible is the Banner of Grace.**

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Every Christian boy or girl is a soldier of the cross, a standard-bearer of truth, and a witness for Jesus. And the Bible is the flag or banner, to read and wave for Jesus. In the olden times it was a disgrace for a legion to lose its standard. "When Cæsar undertook the conquest of Britain, the appearance of the foe was so formidable as to deter him from landing. At length the standard-bearer of the tenth legion leaped into the waves, and made for the shore. The troops followed to protect their flag, and thus secured a landing." Let us always be brave and true and faithful to the dear old flag of grace, the Bible.

**The Banner of Truth.** *Ps.* lx. 4.

**The Banner of Love.** *Song of Sol.* ii. 4.

**The Banner of Salvation.** *Ps.* xx. 5.

**The Banner of Peace.** *Col.* i. 20.

**The Banner of Victory.** *Ex.* xvii. 5.



When Hedley Vicars, the Christian soldier, was converted, he knew that he would be made the butt of much ridicule, so he resolved to be beforehand with them, and in the morning on which he made his decision he took his Bible, and laid it down upon the table. Very soon a fellow-officer came in, and, looking at the book, exclaimed, "Hallo, Vicars! turned Methodist?" To which he made reply, "That is my flag; and by the grace of God, I hope to be true to it as long as I live." The Lord help us to be true to our Banner.

## **The Heart Treasure.**

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*Ps. cxix. 11.*

This is a very wise purpose of the Psalmist, and is the effect and fruit of the Lord's gracious dealings with him. There is an honest longing to be free from sin, obedient to God, and holy in life, and he knows the great power for this is the Word of God in the heart. Yes, this is the Divine instrument of purity, grace, and power for every life. It is the living word to save us, the holy law to regulate us, the loving commands to call us, and the glad testimony to cheer us; and hiding the word in the heart means receiving it, understanding it, keeping it, and obeying it.



Let us all hide the Word of God in our hearts, and take the counsel of this Psalm.

1. **As a Power for the Heart.** v. 11.
2. **As a Light for the Mind.** v. 130.
3. **As a Tonic for the Memory.** v. 93.
4. **As a Nugget for the Soul.** v. 163.
5. **As a Lamp for the Feet.** v. 105.
6. **As a Song for the Life.** v. 54.
7. **As a Tuning Fork for the Tongue.** v. 171 and 172.

A boy went to the Sabbath School during his father's absence. On the father's return he went upstairs, and finding his son reading the Word of God, he asked him, "What book are you reading?" He replied, "The Bible." "Where did you get it?" "In yonder Sabbath School." He took the Bible from him, and committed it to the flames. When he saw the Bible burned, the son said, "Father, you have burned my Bible, but you cannot burn out of me those nice chapters I have committed to memory out of the Gospel of John."

### **Tell of the Saviour's Love.**

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*Mark v. 19.*

The Lord Jesus saves us in order that we may serve Him. It is not merely to take us to heaven by and bye, but to fill us with His



love and life, that we may witness for Him in this poor dark world of sin and sorrow. If we know His love, we must not keep it to ourselves. If we have tasted of His grace, we must tell it out to our friends, and if we have been healed by His power, we must carry the good tidings to other needy ones. Let us remember the words of Jesus, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee" (*Mark* v. 19). Let us tell of

1. **His Wondrous Love**, like the Shepherds.  
*Luke* ii. 17, 18.
2. **His Delivering Love**, like the Healed Man.  
*Mark* v. 19.
3. **His Great Love**, like Andrew. *John* i. 41.
4. **His Saving Love**, like the Woman of Samaria.  
*John* iv. 29.
5. **His Living Love**, like Mary. *John* xx. 17, 18.

A little boy who had become much in earnest about his father's salvation, asked him, "Father, won't you love Jesus?" The father said he would soon. The boy repeated his question, saying, "Father, will you love Jesus to-day?" This led the father to seek the salvation of his soul that day. "The Love of Christ is a story without an end, that angels throng to hear." "For the love of Christ constraineth us." 2 *Cor.* v. 14.



***"Thy Word is a Lamp."***

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The Bible is compared with a number of practical every-day things in order that we may understand its importance and use. It is a Hammer to break us, a Fire to purify us, a Sword to pierce us, and a Lamp to guide us ; but there are different uses for the Lamp, so the Bible is manifold in its light and blessing.

**The Bible is like—**

1. **A Policeman's Lamp.**  
With a Search Light. *Ps. cxix. 130*
2. **A Postman's Lamp.**  
With a Clear Light. *Ps. xxxvi. 9.*
3. **A Guard's Lamp.**  
With a Signal Light. *Ps. xix. 11.*
4. **A Watchman's Lamp.**  
With a Protecting Light. *Ps. cxix. 11.*
5. **A Traveller's Lamp.**  
With a Guiding Light. *Ps. cxix. 105.*
6. **A Miner's Lamp.**  
With a Safety Light. *Prov. vi. 23.*
7. **A Home Lamp.**  
With a Useful Light. *Prov. xiii. 9.*

The Search Light touches our conscience and shows us our sin. The Clear Light touches our minds and shows us our character. The Signal



Light touches our souls and shows us our danger. The Protecting Light touches our hearts and shows us our safety. The Guiding Light touches our path and shows us our way. The Safety Light touches our life and shows us its value. The useful Light touches our service and shows us its power.

“Good Thomas Watson says:—‘The Bible is a Rock of Diamonds; a Chain of Pearls; the Sword of the Spirit; a Chart by which the Christian sails to Eternity; the Map by which he daily walks; the Sundial by which he sets his life; and the Balance in which he weighs his actions.’”

“‘Read the Bible till you love it,’ was the advice given to a young man who was just setting out from home to face the world. He smiled at the idea of ever loving the Bible, but he promised his old father that at least he would read it daily. It became so interesting to him, as he read, that everything was thrown aside for it, and ere long he became a preacher of the Gospel.”

“The Word is the Holy Spirit’s cloudy pillar, and those who follow it find guidance, safety, and comfort.” *Rom. viii. 14.*

“To be a Pilot without a Chart, or a Soldier without a Sword, or a Traveller without a Lamp, is ridiculous; but more so to be a Christian without the Word of God and skill to use it.”  
1 *Tim. i. 7.*



## Wanted !

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“Men wanted !” “Boys wanted !” We often see these notices in shop windows and other places, and we can see it in the Bible, too. It is the great notice from Heaven. Men wanted ; Women wanted ; Boys wanted ; Girls wanted. All wanted for Jesus and for Heaven. The Gospel advertisement is sounding all around us. Here is an acrostic which shows us what is wanted :—

**W**ise Heads—1 *Kings* iv. 29 ; 2 *Tim.* iii. 15.

**A**ttentive Ears—*Ex.* iii. 4 ; *Is.* vi. 8 ; *Luke* x. 39.

**N**ew Hearts—*Ezek.* xi. 19 ; 2 *Cor.* v. 17 ; *Acts* viii. 37.

**T**ongues United—*Mark* vii. 37 ; *Acts* ii. 7, 8.

**E**yes Opened—2 *Kings* vi. 17 ; *Luke* xxiv. 31 ; *Acts* ix. 18.

**D**ecision—*John* i. 37 ; *Mark* ii. 14 ; *Ruth* i. 17.

We can be wise, like Timothy ; attentive, like Samuel ; loving, like Lydia ; praising, like David ; faithful, like the healed man ; and active, like Matthew. Decide at once to follow Jesus.

### THREE THINGS WE REQUIRE.

The three great things we all require are *wisdom*, *decision*, and *promptness*. There is a suggestive fable in one of the ancient books. A gentleman owned a fish pond. One day he let the



water flow off into the river close by, in order to catch the fish more readily. Three of the fishes held a conference to decide what to do ; their decision was to swim out into the river with the flowing of the water. One decided to go at once—*wise in good time*. One to remain as long as possible—*wise just in time*. The other thought any time would do, and was caught—*wise behind the time*. Numbers of people act like this with regard to God's salvation. Some are wise in good time. Some are wise just in time—and many are wise when it is too late.

### What Time is it?

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The wise man says "There is a time for every purpose under the sun." "A time to be born, and a time to die," and between those two important points, "A time to plant and a time to reap," and a very busy time it is, too, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." "Watchman, what of the night?" The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night." *Is. xxi. 11, 12.*

"It is time to seek the Lord." *Hos. x. 12.*

"It is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." *Rom. xiii. 11.*

"It is time for thee, Lord, to work." *Ps. cxix. 126.*



1. It is time to seek the Lord—A call to the Sinner.
2. It is high time to awake out of sleep—A warning to the Saint.
3. It is time for Thee, Lord, to work—A prayer to the Lord.

“Time darks the sky, time brings the day ;  
 Time glads the heart, time puffs all joys away ;  
 Time builds a city, and o’erthrows a nation ;  
 Time writes a story of their desolation ;  
 Time hath a time when we shall be no more ;  
 Time maketh poor men rich, and rich men poor.”

“Time *was* is past, thou canst not it recall ;  
 Time *is* thou hast : employ the portion small ;  
 Time *future* is not, and may never be ;  
 Time *present* is the only time for thee.”

### Winning Words of Welcome.

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“Take the water of Life freely.”—*Rev.* xxii. 17.

The testimony of Mr. Joseph Hart, the Hymn writer in the last century, was very striking, and will be helpful to us. “Joseph Hart was, by the free and sovereign grace and Spirit of God, raised up from the depths of sin and delivered from the bonds of mere profession and self-righteousness, and led to rest entirely for salvation in the finished atonement and perfect obedience of Christ.”

“O ! bring no price ;  
 God’s grace is free  
 To Paul, to Magdalene, to me.”

H



There are seven wonderful W's in this verse, and if we place one word on each day of the week the *Little Folks* will remember them. We have the—

1. <b>Witnesses.</b>	The Spirit and the Bride.	<i>Rev.</i> xxii. 17.
2. <b>Want.</b>	Thirst.	<i>Matt.</i> v. 6.
3. <b>Word.</b>	Come.	<i>Matt.</i> xi. 28.
4. <b>Whosoever.</b>	All.	<i>Acts</i> xiii. 39.
5. <b>Willingness.</b>	Take.	<i>Ps.</i> cxvi. 13.
6. <b>Water.</b>	Life.	<i>John</i> iv. 14.
7. <b>Welcome.</b>	Freely.	<i>Is.</i> lv. 1.

“ Mercy is welcome news indeed  
To those who guilty stand ;  
Sinners who feel what help they need  
Will bless the helping hand.”

### Wonderful Rod.

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The Rod in Scripture is the emblem of authority, power, and blessing ; and is connected with a great many features of the *Life*, *Experience*, and *Service* of the Lord's people, and became the special instrument of Power, Direction, and Blessing to God's Israel.

There is a sense in which the *Rod* is an illustration of the Word of God. Yes, the Bible in its different uses may be as *The Rod of God to us*. The use of the Bible Rod was—



1. **A Counting Rod.** *The Shepherd's Rod.* *Ezek.*  
xx. 37 ; *Lev.* xxvii. 32 ; *Jer.* xxxiii. 13.
2. **A Confirming Rod.** *The Servant's Rod.* *Ex.*  
iv. 2.
3. **A Commanding Rod.** *The Leader's Rod.* *Ex.*  
xiv. 16.
4. **A Correcting Rod.** *The Teacher's Rod.* *Num.*  
xvii. 8.
5. **A Cheering Rod.** *The Providing Rod.* *Ex.*  
xvii. 6.
6. **A Comforting Rod.** *The Father's Rod.* *Ps.*  
xxiii. 4.
7. **A Crushing Rod.** *The Conqueror's Rod.* *Ps.*  
ii. 9.

The Shepherd, Tells and Marks and Guides His sheep. (*John* x. 27, 28). The Rod is a picture of common things being used by the Lord. The Rod of Scripture points out the old paths for Pilgrim's feet. The Lord corrects His children by the Rod of His Word. He corrects all the errors in Doctrine, Life, and Service, by the Scriptures. This Instrument of salvation and life brings water from the Rock. The Bible tells us the Rock has been smitten for us. The crushing Rod is the emblem of the mighty power of Christ, when He comes to put the world right again. He is the living Word. *Rev.* xix. 13.



## Wonderful Name.

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“And His Name shall be called wonderful.”—  
*Isaiah ix. 6.*

Old Testament names are full of meaning, and generally express some feature of the character, life, or service of the persons who bear them. There is a Name which is above every name, and that one is *Jesus*; but there is another very precious name of His, and that is *Wonderful*. He has—

1. A Wonderful eye to see us. *His Sympathy.*
2. A Wonderful ear to hear us. *His Solitude.*
3. A Wonderful heart to love us. *His Salvation.*
4. A Wonderful hand to hold us. *His Strength.*
5. A Wonderful word to cheer us. *His Support.*
6. A Wonderful spirit to guide us. *His Spirit.*
7. A Wonderful home to receive us. *His Satisfaction.*

I witnessed something most interesting many years ago in the Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester. A little dog was lying very comfortably in the lions' den, and they took no notice of it. The visitors were indeed surprised, and there were numerous enquiries for an explanation. The story was a very touching one. The keeper said that some little time before our visit a man came



into the gardens with a dog. It vexed him in some way : so to get rid of it, as he thought, he threw it into the lions' den ; but, to everybody's surprise, the lions did not touch the dog. After awhile the man's temper cooled down, and he went to the keeper and asked for his dog. " Well," said the keeper, " go in and fetch it out ! " But the man dared not do that. The dog was in perfect safety now. So all who put their trust in Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, are perfectly safe, and none shall be able to pluck them from His hand. It is indeed a wonderful hand to hold us !

### *Divine Love.*

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" Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." *Matt.* xviii. 14.

1. **The Father's Will.** " It is not the will of your Father."
2. **The Saviour's Love.** He yearns for the little ones' Safety.
3. **The Holy Spirit's Word.** He has written it.
4. **The Source of Joy.** The Salvation of the Children.
5. **The Light of Hope.** Not one shall perish.



**Tender Touches.**

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of My Father which is in Heaven." *Matt.* xviii. 10.

1. **The Warning of Love.** "Take heed."
2. **The Window of Light.** "For I say unto you,"  
etc.
3. **The Wonder of Grace.** Angels to guard them.
4. **The Welcome of Home.** Father's House.

**Little Pictures.**

*Matt.* xviii.

1. **A Picture of Salvation.** *Matt.* xviii. 1, 4.
2. **A Picture of Sympathy.** „ 5.
3. **A Picture of Service.** „ 10.
4. **A Picture of Security.** „ 14.

**Christian Registry.**

2 *Chron.* xxxi. 18.

"And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation, for in their set office (or trust) they sanctified themselves in holiness."



1. **The Birth of the little ones.** The link with their parents.
2. **The Registry of the little ones.** The link with Israel.
3. **The Life of the little ones.** The link with the congregation.
4. **The Service of the little ones.** The link with the Lord.

### **Love Reckoning.**

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*Gen. xliii. 8.*

“Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live and not die, both me, and thou, and also our little ones.”

1. **The Picture of Need.** “That we may live and *not die.*”
2. **The Reckoning of Love.** All included, none left out.”
3. **The Link of Life.** “Send the lad with me.”
4. **The Hope of Help.** “That we may live.”

### **The Angel of the Lord, the Seeker.**

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*Genesis xvi. 7, 14.*

The Angel of the Lord who met Hagar in the wilderness was undoubtedly the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as the 13th and 14th verses



prove. The whole scene is one of the Old Testament foreshadowings of the Lord's seeking and saving grace. He is—

1. **The Seeing One**, v. 13. So Jesus. *John* i. 48.
2. **The Seeking One**, v. 7. „ *Luke* xix. 10.
3. **The Searching One**, v. 8. „ *John* iv. 19, 29.
4. **The Saving One**, v. 9. „ *Luke* xv. 4, 7.

### **The Angel of the Lord. the Sympathiser.**

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*Genesis* xxii. 11, 18.

The Lord had deep and important lessons to teach Abraham as well as to test his faith. He must have a glimpse of the mystery of the Cross, and of Life and Blessing through sacrifice and suffering. So in this wonderful experience we have a picture of Calvary's wonders. The Angel of the Lord here is Jesus (v. 11, 18). "Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad" (*S. John* viii. 56). This is a wonderful story of Love illustrated.

1. **Sacrificing Love**, v. 1, 9. *John* iii. 16. *Rom.* viii. 32.
2. **Suffering Love**, v. 10. *1 Tim.* ii. 5. *Gal.* ii. 20.
3. **Saving Love**, v. 11, 13. *John* x. 11. *Eph.* v. 25.
4. **Satisfying Love**, v. 14, 18. *Eph.* i. 3. *1 Peter* i. 3.



## **Little Ships.**

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“And there were also with Him other little ships.”—*Mark* iv. 36.

Here we have Little Pictures, Little Treasures, Little Traders, and Little Pilgrims.

1. **Little Ships** were not forgotten. Hope for all.
2. **Little Ships** need in the storm. A Picture for all.
3. **Little Ships** in touch with Jesus. The Anchor for all.
4. **Little Ships** enjoying the calm. A Blessing for all.
5. **Little Ships** in active service. A Lesson for all.

## **Watch.**

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“And what I say unto you I say unto all, watch.”  
*Mark* xiii. 37.

If a sentinel at a city gate needs to be watchful, much more he that has the care of Mansoul. Therefore let us be as a sentinel on duty, as a sailor on deck, and as a policeman on duty—*Watchful*. We pass on the Lord's words to our Tiny Folks.



Watch your

**W** Words.

**A** Actions.

**T** Thoughts.

**C** Companions.

**H** Hearts.

But remember watchfulness without prayer is presumption; prayer without watchfulness is hypocrisy.

### **A Wonderful Baby.**

*Exodus* ii. 2 to 11.

The Birth of Moses was a great event. He was to be a Deliverer of his people, a Prophet of the Lord, and a Type of Christ, our great Saviour and King.

1. **The Baby Born**—*v.* 2. A great Event.
2. **The Baby Hidden**—*v.* 3. A great Secret.
3. **The Baby Found**—*v.* 6. A great Surprise.
4. **The Baby Nursed**—*v.* 9. A great Providence.
5. **The Baby Named**—*v.* 10. A great Hope.
6. **The Baby Grown**—*v.* 11. A great Blessing.

The special points in the wonderful birth and early experience of Moses, illustrate the kind providence of God over every life that is dedicated to God by prayer. In the life of Moses we see God's Time, God's Protection, God's Providence, God's Care, God's Guidance, and God's Blessing. The Faith and Prayer of his Parents secured all these things.



**Bags Full and Empty.**

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1. **The Black Bag.** (*Job* xiv. 17). *Sin.*
2. **The Business Bag.** (*Prov.* xvi. 11). *Selfishness.*  
(*Deut.* xxv. 33).
3. **The Blank Bag.** (*Hag.* i. 6). *Sorrow.*
4. **The Baneful Bag.** (*John* xii. 6). *Shame.*
5. **The Best Bag.** (*Luke* xiii. 33). *Security.*

**Steps to Life and Hope.**

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*Genesis* xxi. 15 to 21.

A wilderness wanderer, with a spent bottle and a dying Lad. What trouble ! Dying for the want of water. How many there are like this ; but there is provision for the sinner, " I was brought low and He helped me."

1. **The Lad Dying—v.** 16. *Helpless.*
2. **The Lad Crying—v.** 17. *Hope.*
3. **The Lad Living—v.** 17, 18, 19. *Healing.*
4. **The Lad Growing—v.** 20. *Health.*
5. **The Lad Dwelling—v.** 21. *Happiness.*

God *heard* the voice of the Lad, God *saved* the Lad, God *promised* to make the Lad *great*, and God was *with* the Lad, the true marks of Love, and Life, and Hope.



## Wandering Jacob.

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Four finger posts to safety. "Behold a ladder set up on the earth," "Behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it," "Behold the Lord stood above it," "And behold I am with thee." *Gen.* xxviii. 10 to 15.

1. **A Weary Man.** "And Jacob went out," etc., *v.* 10.
2. **A Wonderful Vision.** "And he dreamed," *v.* 12.
3. **A Waking Dreamer.** "And Jacob awaked," *v.* 16.
4. **A Worshipping Pilgrim.** "This is the gate of heaven," *v.* 17.
5. **A Witnessing Stone.** "And this stone," etc., *v.* 22.

"I am with thee"—*Companionship*, "And will keep thee"—*Guardianship*, "And will bring thee," etc.,—*Guidance*, or *Presence*, *Power*, and *Promise*.

## Planning and Praying.

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*Genesis* xxxii. 20 to 32.

One of the great secrets of victory in everyday life is prayer. "Prayer is the ladder by which the soul ascends into its refuge from storms and dangers." See what Jacob did



1. **His Preparation.** "So went the present over," etc., *v.* 21.
2. **His Prayer.** "And there wrestled a man," etc., *v.* 24.
3. **His Power.** "As a prince hast thou power," etc., *v.* 28.
4. **His Privilege.** "I have seen God face to face," *v.* 30.
5. **His Peace.** "And he blessed him there," *v.* 29.

Jacob limped, but "Better limp to heaven than leap to hell," says Mr. Moody.

### **Joseph's Coat of Many Colours.**

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*Genesis xxxvii. 23.*

Joseph's coat of many colours was not only a token of His Father's special love, but it was a picture of the many graces of Joseph's character and life. How beautiful his life !

1. **He was Intelligent.** He had dreams of special light—chap. xxxvii. v.
2. **He was Loving.** Sought his brethren—*v.* 16.
3. **He was Patient.** Stripped and sold—*v.* 23 and 28.
4. **He was Diligent.** Trusted and prosperous—chap. xxxix. 3.
5. **He was Pure.** Tempted but resisted—*v.* 9.



6. **He was Wise.** Told Pharaoh's dream—chap. xli. 32.
7. **He was Faithful.** Took care of his brethren—chap. xlv. 4.

Joseph was a type of Christ in his excellent character, tender compassion, and faithful love.

### **Holdfast.**

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*Prov. iv. 13.*

“Take fast hold of instruction ; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life.”

1. **The Take hold of Faith.**
2. **The Holdfast of Truth.**
3. **The Keep hold of Life.**
4. **The Freehold of Grace.**

### **Jesus is the Way.**

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*John xiv. 6.*

1. **Jesus is the New Way to God.**
2. **Jesus is the Sure Way to God.**
3. **Jesus is the Safe Way to God.**
4. **Jesus is the Holy Way to God.**
5. **Jesus is the Happy Way to God.**
6. **Jesus is the Only Way to God.**



## **Five Great Powers in Romans viii.**

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1. **The Power of Grace.** *Saving.* v. 1.
2. **The Power of the Spirit.** *Guiding.* v. 14.
3. **The Power of Faith.** *Reckoning.* v. 18.
4. **The Power of Love.** *Providing.* v. 28.
5. **The Power of Life.** *Keeping.* v. 39.

## **What the Lord is to us.**

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*Ps. xxvii. 1 to 9.*

1. **The Lord is my Light.** v. 1.  
Light of Conviction. v. 1.  
Light of Revelation. v. 4.  
Light of Reflection. v. 9.  
Light of Direction. v. 11.
2. **The Lord is my Salvation.** v. 1.  
Saviour from all Enemies. v. 2.  
Saviour in time of Trouble. v. 5.  
Saviour for Ever. v. 9.
3. **The Lord is my Strength.** v. 1.  
Strong in Him.  
Strong with Him.  
Strong for Him.



## **The Power of United Praise.**

"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together."—*Ps. xxxiv. 3.*

United praise is a mighty power, and fellowship in praise is a great blessing.

1. **It Strengthens our Faith.**
2. **It Warms our Love.**
3. **It Brightens our Hope.**
4. **It Intensifies our Joy.**
5. **It Glorifies our God.**

## **The Blessing of Unity.**

*Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 2, 3.*

The Father's blessing, Goodness; the Holy Spirit's blessing, Anointing; and the Son's blessing, Life for Evermore.

1. **A Family Blessing.** Brethren united.
2. **A Fragrant Blessing.** Like ointment.
3. **A Fruitful Blessing.** As the dew, etc.
4. **A Future Blessing.** Life for Evermore.

## **The Pilgrim's Experience.**

*Ps. cxxxviii. 1 to 8.*

### **1. The Pilgrim's Praise.**

For salvation joys, *v. 1*; for sacred fellowship, *v. 2*; for strength and hope, *v. 3*; and for songs of praise, *v. 1, 4, 5.*



**2. The Pilgrim's Progress.**

*The Power.* The Lord is with us. *v.* 6.

*The Path.* In the midst of trouble. *v.* 7.

*The Provision.* Thou wilt revive me. *v.* 7.

*The Protection.* Strength from Thy hand.

**3. The Pilgrim's Prospects.**

Faith's full assurance, Faith's firm foundation,  
and Faith's fervent prayer.

**Links of Love.**

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*Deut.* vii. 6 to 9.

1. **The Choice of Love.** *v.* 6.
2. **The Selection of Love.** *v.* 6.
3. **The Bond of Love.** *v.* 8.
4. **The Work of Love.** *v.* 8.
5. **The Continuance of Love.** *v.* 9.

**Steps to Real Greatness.**

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*I Sam.* i. 28. *Eph.* ii. 11.

1. **Samuel lent to the Lord.** (*I Sam.* i. 28).  
Given to God.
2. **Samuel ministering to the Lord.** (*I Sam.* ii.  
11). Pleasing God.
3. **Samuel growing in Favour and Faith.** (*I Sam.*  
ii. 21-26). Preparing for God.



4. **Samuel called to Active Service.** (1 Sam. iii. 10). Responding to God.
5. **Samuel established a True Prophet.** (1 Sam. iii. 19-21) Approved of God.

### ***The Shepherd.***

*Ps. 23.*

1. **Possession.** "The Lord is my Shepherd."
2. **Position.** "He maketh me to lie down," etc.
3. **Progress.** "He leadeth me."
4. **Provision.** "I shall not want"
5. **Presence.** "Thou art with me."
6. **Plenty.** "My cup runneth over."
7. **Prospect.** "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

### ***The Living Stone.***

*Isaiah xxviii. 16, 17.*

1. **The Selected Stone.** To Save us. 1 Peter ii. 4.
2. **The Foundation Stone.** To Bear us. 1 Cor. iii. 11.
3. **The Tried Stone.** To Hold us. 1 Peter ii. 6.
4. **The Corner Stone.** To Unite us. Eph. ii. 20.
5. **The Sure Stone.** To Keep us. 1 Peter ii. 5.
6. **The Testing Stone.** To Try us. 1 Peter ii. 8.
7. **The Lasting Stone.** To Satisfy us. 1 Peter ii. 7.



## **Golden Truths.**

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1. **The Golden Girdle.** (*Rev.* i. 13). Perfect Truth.
2. **The Golden Sceptre.** (*Esther* v. 2). Timely Grace.
3. **The Golden Pipes.** (*Zech.* iv. 4). Present Blessing.
4. **The Golden Censer.** (*Rev.* viii. 3). Presented Prayer.
5. **The Golden Candlestick.** (*Rev.* ii. 1). Burning Light.
6. **The Golden Vessels.** (*Ezra* vi. 5). Special Service.
7. **The Golden Crown.** (*Rev.* iv. 4). Eternal Reward.

## **The Active Service Band.**

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*Exodus* xvii. 8, 16.

1. **Active Service Band.** Selected Men. (*v.* 9). Chosen Men.
2. **Active Service Business.** Warfare. (*v.* 10). Called to Fight.
3. **Active Service Battles.** By Prayer. (*v.* 11, 12). Confident in Prayer.



4. **Active Service Bravery.** Standing True. (*v.* 13). Courageous for God.
5. **Active Service Banner.** Jehovah. (*v.* 14, 15). Conquerors through Faith.

### **Jesus, the Pattern Worker.**

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*Matthew ix. 35, 38.*

1. **Jesus the travelling Preacher.** (*v.* 35). A wonderful Worker.
2. **Jesus the great Physician.** (*v.* 35). A willing Helper.
3. **Jesus the feeling Shepherd.** (*v.* 36). A warm Friend.
4. **Jesus the faithful Adviser.** (*v.* 37). A wise Counsellor.
5. **Jesus the loving Saviour.** (*v.* 38). A wakeful Witness.

### **Follow.**

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What is it to Follow ?

- F** Forsaking the old life. *2 Cor. v. 17.*  
**O** Obeying the Lord's word. *John xxi. 22.*  
**L** Looking not behind. *Luke ix. 62.*  
**L** Looking unto Jesus. *Heb. xii. 2.*  
**O** Onward to the end. *Phil. iii. 13, 14.*  
**W** Watching unto prayer. *Mark xiii. 33.*



**Home.**


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What is Home ?

- H** Habitation of Peace.  
**O** Our own fireside.  
**M** Mansion of Love.  
**E** Earnest of Heaven.

**Dawn.**


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What are the lessons from the Dawn of Day ?  
 There are two important *Dawns* in Scripture.  
 The Dawn of the Resurrection (*Matt.* xxviii. 1)  
 and the Dawn of the Second Advent (2 *Peter* i.  
 19). What does the Dawn mean in our natural  
 life ?

- |                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| <b>D</b> Darkness passing away.  | Infancy.   |
| <b>A</b> Awakening to the light. | Childhood. |
| <b>W</b> Welcome of the day.     | Youth.     |
| <b>N</b> Nature's call to work.  | Manhood.   |

**My Friend.**

- 
- F** eels for me,  
**R** edeems me,  
**I** ntercedes for me,  
**E** nlightens me,  
**N** ever leaves me,  
**D** ied for me. *Prov.* xviii. 24.



## **What is Eternity?**

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**E** Everlasting Light or Darkness  
**T** Time's Termination.  
**E** Eternal Life or Death.  
**R** Rest for the Weary.  
**N** Never-ending Service.  
**I** Infinite Day or Night.  
**T** Transcendent Mystery.  
**Y** Yonder for Aye.





## Bird Lessons for the Bairns.

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This world is like a large Aviary, full of all kinds of Birds, both clean and unclean. Every one has its own special sphere of life, action, and service, and every one has its existence for the glory of its Creator, and for the instruction, comfort, and blessing of man. The Lord knows their names, claims them all (*Ps.* l. 11), and has in His divine wisdom appointed each one to its own peculiar mission and service. Every creature is made for the glory of God, and the "Birds of wing" (margin) are especially commanded to "Praise the Lord" (*Ps.* cxlviii. 10), and they all do it so well and so heartily, and all have been given to man for food (*Gen.* ix. 2, 3), for sacrifice (*Lev.* i. 14), for song (*Song of Sol.* ii. 12), and for service (*Job* xii. 7). They are living, active, object lessons of trust, energy, joy, and praise. "Behold the fowls of the air ; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them, Are ye not much better than they ?" (*Matt.* vi. 26). We have selected twelve of the best known Birds, and gathered from their lives and habits a few facts and figures of life, activity, and usefulness, which may serve as an inspiration and help in our Christian service for the Master. And in the life of each Bird there is some special characteristic of grace or weakness illustrated. We have the trust of the Sparrow, the friendship of the Robin,



the usefulness of the Raven, the vigour of the Thrush, the selfishness of the Cuckoo, the mission of the Swallow, the song of the Nightingale, the thanksgiving of the Lark, the fear of the Partridge, the service of the Blackbird, the gentleness of the Dove, and the strength of the Eagle. May all these good qualities be ours.

### ***The Sparrow : A Lesson on Trust.***

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Every creature of God has its place and purpose in this big world of life, and each in its own special sphere can praise the Lord. "The beast of the field, the creeping things and flying fowl (or birds of wing)" (*Ps.* cxlviii. 110), are called to praise the Lord. Birds are particularly adapted for this happy service, and they do it, too, most heartily to the glory of their Creator and Preserver. Even the little sparrow chirps out its gratitude and joy, and teaches us many lessons of trust and hope.

When Martin Luther once saw a sparrow he exclaimed, "Thou art my Doctor of Divinity, for thou teachest me God's goodness, wisdom, and power, and His wonderful Providence.

"I am only a little sparrow,  
A bird of low degree,  
My life's of little value,  
But the dear Lord cares for me."

1. **The Sparrow's Safety.**—(*Matt.* vi. 29 to 31). A lesson on Life.



God's Kingdom ruleth over all, but there is a special Providence over all His trustful children, and sparrows are the living illustrations of God's goodness to His people.

Sparrows are only common, small, and feeble birds, yet not one of them falls to the ground without God's notice. How safe is every life in the hands of God.

Trust His love for He knows the value of life, *v. 29, Mark viii. 36 ; 1 Peter i. 18, 19.*

Trust His power for he preserves every life, *v. 29, Luke xii. 16 ; Heb. i. 3.*

Trust His wisdom for he counts every particular of life, *v. 30, Acts xxvii., 34 ; 1 Peter v. 7.*

Trust His grace for He wants to save every life, *v. 31, Luke xii. 7 ; Matt. x. 31.*

So the life, habits, value, and experience of the sparrows are lessons for our every-day life.

## 2. **The Sparrow's Supply.**—*Matt. vi. 22.* A lesson on **Trust.**

"Behold the fowls of the air." . . . "Your Heavenly Father feedeth them." The sparrows are included in this large family, and share in the common blessings of a Divine provider. If our God clothes the fields, beautifies the lily, and feeds the birds, surely we may trust His love. Sparrows are very sagacious little teachers, and give us many lessons on faith, hope, and activity, they are constantly chirping to us.



"Mortals cease from toil and sorrow  
God provideth for to-morrow."

And in order to get into this happy place of trust, we are to "Behold the fowls of the air" (v. 26), and see our Father's hand. "Consider the lilies" (v. 28), and know His care for us, and "Seek first His Kingdom" (v. 33), then "All these things shall be added." The great lesson is "Forget not His mercies" (*Ps.* ciii. 3), "Fret not at His dealings" (*Rom.* viii. 28), and "Fear not the unknown future," *Heb.* xiii. 5. 6.

A good man who died in 1677 was imprisoned at Winchester for Christ's sake. After his release he was several times reduced to great straits. Once when he and his family had breakfasted, and had nothing left for another meal, his wife became very anxious and exclaimed, "What shall we do for our poor children?" He asked her to take a walk with him, and see what the Lord was doing; seeing a little bird he said, "Take notice how that little bird sits and chirps, though we cannot tell whether it has had a breakfast, and if it has, it knows not whither to go for a dinner; be of good cheer, and do not distrust the providence of God, for are we not better than many sparrows?" Before dinner they had plenty of provision brought to them. "They that trust in the Lord shall not want any good thing."

3. **The Sparrow's Song.**—(*Ps.* cxlviii. 10). Praise the Lord. A lesson on **Gratitude.**



One writer says "The sparrow has no song worthy the name," but it can *chirp*, and that is something. It does its best, and its very chirp is an evidence of life, an expression of joy, and a testimony for God. The *chirp, chirp, chirp* of the sparrow, no doubt, in bird language, means "Praise the Lord." We may not possess perfect voices and be able to sing like the nightingale, but if we can sing with our hearts, and chirp out our thanksgiving in an ordinary way like the sparrow, it will show we are alive, glad, and happy in the Lord, and will be a cheering testimony to God in this dark world of sin. Let us all try and say, "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

4. **The Sparrow's Sense.**—(*Ps.* lxxxiv. 3). A lesson on **Wisdom.**

"The sparrow hath found an house." The wise instinct of this homely bird leads it to secure a place of shelter, rest, and safety. And the bird's nest is a place of shelter from the storm, a cradle of life, and a house of peace. How wise are these little birds. What a nice illustration of wise forethought for all our tiny folks. We all need a place of shelter and rest for the soul, and there is only one sure rest for the soul, and that is *Jesus Himself*. Do we know Him? are we trusting Him? Have we His rest? If not, let us "seek Him and we shall find Him" (*Prov.*



viii. 17). "Come to Him and He will receive us" (*John* vi. 37; *Luke* xv. 2). "Come to Him and He will give us *Rest*" (*Matt.* xi. 28; xix. 14). Then we can sing with the sparrow:—

"I just fold my wings at night-fall,  
Wherever I happen to be :  
For the Father is always watching,  
And no harm can happen to me."

### The Robin: A Link of Friendship.

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Little Robin Red-breast is one of the most popular of our song birds, and a great favourite with all our *Tiny Folks*. He is not so pert as the sparrow, but he is quite as bright and cheerful. Every English heart and home has a warm welcome for this little friend. Almost every thing about this sweet songster is attractive. His confiding nature, inquisitive look, happy song, beautiful plumage, useful life, and homely ways make him a bird loved by all; a verse by *Wordsworth* very clearly expresses this universal feeling.

"Art thou the bird whom man loves best  
The pious bird with the scarlet breast  
Our little English robin,  
The bird that comes about our doors  
When Autumn winds are sobbing ;  
The bird who by some name or other  
All men who know thee call thee brother ?"

*Courage, patience, hope* are some of the lessons this humble friend is sent to teach us. He seems



to say, "Be busy. Be bright. Be brave, and all will be well. *Trust, Sing, and Wait.* The darkness will pass away and the summer will come again."

1. **The Robin's Usefulness** teaches us to **Be Busy.**

The life of the robin is a very active one. *Push, perseverance, progress*, are some of the features of his wonderful life. He is a good gardener, busy builder, wise worker, and faithful protector, and without his useful service the gardener's efforts would almost fail. So the bright life of the robin is a constant object-lesson upon industry. His wholesome counsel is "*Be busy*," for this is one of the great secrets of a happy, useful life; yes,

If you want to be **Healthy** - - Be busy. *Prov.*  
x. 4.

If you want to be **Holy** - - - - Be busy. *Prov.*  
xiii. 4.

If you want to be **Happy** - - - Be busy. *2 Peter*  
iii. 14.

If you want to be **Honoured** - Be busy. *Prov.*  
xxii. 29.

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (*Rom.* xii. 11) is the New Testament counsel, and the activity of the robin teaches us the same lesson.

2. **The Robin's Cheerfulness** teaches us to **Be Bright.**



The robin's song is a very charming one, full of tenderness, beauty, and sweetness, and although somewhat lost in the general chorus of the summer songsters, it is most welcome and cheering during the winter months, when the voices of almost all the other birds are silent. Song is one of the robin's testimonies to the Creator's goodness and power. In every season of the year he has a sweet note of praise to his Maker. In the brightness of spring, in the activities of summer, in the stillness of autumn, and in the dreariness of winter, he sings. What a lesson for us all; how much we need this spirit of praise and thanksgiving (*Ps. xxxiv. 1*). The singing robin is a living illustration of this happy service, and his cheerful life should stimulate us to the same bright experience. Let us, like the robin, Praise the Lord. Count His mercies. Sing His praises. Tell of His goodness. Proclaim His greatness, and Pass on the story of His love to others: the 145th Psalm will guide and help us to this cheerful service. O the power of happy song! Numbers have been *saved*, *cheered*, and *comforted* in this dark world of sorrow by the gladness of song. Let us then be bright like the robin.

### **3. The Robin's Trustfulness teaches us to Be Brave.**

The world is full of living teachers; the robin is one of the wisest of them. The lessons sug-



gested by this faithful little teacher are many—Confiding faith, Patient hope, and Abiding love (or constant friendship). The robin is a remarkably confiding creature. He trusts us for his food, when the stores of nature are closed against him by frost and snow; he keeps hopeful and bright in the darkest days of trial, and, like a faithful friend, he stays with us all the winter, when other birds leave us for a warmer clime. These virtues in the robin illustrate the powers of a really happy life. Faith in God (*Mark* ii. 22), Hope in Life (*Heb.* vi. 19), Love in Labour (*1 Thess.* i. 3), Faithfulness in Friendship (*Prov.* xviii. 24), and Diligence in Duty (*Rev.* ii. 10). These are the things which fit us for life's highest service, and lead us to glorify our God. Let us show our interest in the *robin* by caring for his needs, listening to his songs, and learning his lessons of trust and hope. Our poetical helper, Mr. Luff, sends us the following verses :—

- “ Oh for friends, who faithful ever  
Robin-like will cheer our home,  
In life's rough and stormy weather,  
When the frosts of trouble come.
- “ Friends, whom trials make but dearer :  
Friends, who then will faithful prove :  
Sing the sweeter, come the nearer,  
Show the stronger, purer love.
- “ Jesus, faithful friend, be near us  
Mid our Spring and Summer flowers :  
In the Autumnal harvests cheer us,  
Leave us not in Wintry hours.”



## **The Raven: A Guide to Usefulness.**

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The Raven is the largest of the crow family. A bird of striking character, keen eye, strong wing, fierce spirit, and croaking voice, and is generally associated with superstitious fear and terror; but most of our tiny folks have light enough to know these superstitious fears are all unfounded. There is no real connection between the presence of the Raven and misfortune. The Bible shows us that God sometimes graciously used this bird as a messenger of His mercy.

The Raven is the bird which is first mentioned by name in the Bible. In connection with the ark and the flood we see the Raven and the Dove mentioned together, an illustration of the sinner and the Saviour. The cunning, cruel croaking of the Raven, a picture of the sinner, and the gentle tenderness of the Dove, a symbol of the Saviour. In the Bible we see the Raven a picture of uncleanness, a guide to prayer, a messenger of mercy, and a preacher on Providence.

### **1. The Raven: A Picture of Uncleanness.—*Gen.* viii. 7; *Lev.* xi. 15.**

This bird is one of the Bible emblems of sin, a picture of everything evil, both within and around us, which unfits us for God's holy presence and service. It left the ark when Noah let it go, and never came back again into the



ark, but remained outside in the midst of death and doom. There are numbers of people to-day, both old and young, like the Raven in nature, taste, and habits, loving sin, outside the ark of safety, and desolate in their sorrow. The only true ark of purity, rest, and safety is in Jesus Himself. There is an old pagan fable about the Raven which is very suggestive. It states: "This bird once had snow white feathers and a sweet melodious song. But one day it carelessly neglected its duty, and then told a lie to hide its fault. As a punishment it was driven from its home and happy service, and as it went forth in disgrace its snow white plumage grew black as night and its sweet voice was changed into an unpleasant croak." This is the sad story of man's fall in figure. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (*Rom.* iii. 23). But, thank God, the remedy is close at hand: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (*1 John* i. 7). The Holy Spirit can restore the most vile and bring them into the favour and fellowship of God—(*Titus* iii. 5, 6), and turn Raven-hearted sinners into singing saints.

**2. The Raven : A Guide to Prayer.**—*Job* xxxviii. 41 ; *Ps.* cxlvii. 9.

Naturalists tell us that when the Raven has fed his young in the nest, and they are well fledged and able to fly abroad, then he thrusts

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them out of the nest and puts them forth to get their own living; and it is just at this special time of their need that they cry aloud for help and food. That is the time the Lord hears their cry for assistance. Taught by instinct the Raven naturally cries for help, and the Lord hears the Raven when he cries. This is a simple illustration of earnest prayer—crying to the Lord. The Bible is full of pictures of successful crying to the Lord in time of need and trouble (*Ps.* xxxiv. 17). There is the cry of need (*Gen.* xxi. 17); the cry of sorrow (*Ex.* iii. 7); the cry of trouble (*Ps.* cvii. 1, 6); the cry of distress (*Ps.* cvii. 28); and the cry for help (*Matt.* xiv. 30). This cry of the heart is the sign of life, the expression of need, the plea of faith, and the sure earnest of blessing. Let us cry to God in our need; He will hear us.

### 3. **The Raven : A Messenger of Mercy.**—*1 Kings* xvii. 6.

This verse is a cabinet of truth. We have in it the faithfulness of God, the faith of Elijah, the provision of love, the lesson of obedience, and the ministry of mercy. This special service was committed to the Ravens, the most unlikely bird for this purpose; but Jehovah has all nature under His control, and He can use all His creatures for His glory and the blessing of His people—the meanest, the weakest, and the most unworthy He can use as His messengers of



mercy. A useful prayer for all is, Lord save me, cleanse me, fill me, and then use me for Thy glory.

**4. The Raven : A Preacher on Providence.—***Luke*  
xii. 24.

“Consider the Ravens,” etc. That is, think of their lives, note their trust, and copy their obedience to the purpose and will of God, and remember we are better than the Ravens, and if God feeds and cares for them, He will never forget us. We are created for a higher purpose, redeemed with an incorruptible price, and preserved for a greater destiny. Therefore, let us learn from the Raven to trust, obey, and wait, and God will give us all things needful for this life, and by-and-bye lift us up to a higher service, where no want shall ever come.

A pious peasant, who lived near Warsaw, had fallen behind with his rent. Though it was winter, his landlord determined to evict him. He was in great trouble, but did not lose his faith in God, and he and his family began to sing:—

“Commit thou all thy griefs  
And ways into His hands.  
To His sure trust and tender care,  
Who earth and Heaven commands.”

Whilst they were singing there was a tap at the window, and when it was opened a tame Raven came in, having in its bill a ring set with precious stones. The peasant took the ring to his minister,



who saw by the crest it bore that it belonged to the King of Poland. The minister carried it to the King, and told him how it had been found. The King sent for the peasant, and so rewarded him that he was no longer in need. The King built him a house, and over the door was an iron tablet on which was the figure of a Raven with a ring in its bill, and underneath these words:—

“Thou everywhere hast sway,  
And all things serve Thy might,  
Thy every act pure blessing is,  
Thy path unsullied light.”

The lesson of the Raven is that of *Trust, Obedience, Patience, and Service.*

### **The Thrush: A Picture of Strength.**

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There are different kinds of the Thrush family, all bold, beautiful birds. There are what naturalists describe as the Wood Thrush, the Missel Thrush, the Redwing Thrush, and the Song Thrush—all more or less British songsters, therefore they claim our warmest interest and gratitude. (We write now of the Song Thrush.) This favourite bird is lively in all its actions, neat in its shape, harmless in its habits, handsome in its plumage, lovely in its song, and familiar in its disposition. A most gallant defender of its young against every enemy. Strong in its affection, brave in its battles, and



faithful in its friendship : a bright illustration of the very best qualities which make a noble, useful life.

“ Sweet thrush ! whose wild untutored strain,  
Salutes the opening year ;  
Renew those melting notes again  
And soothe my ravished ear.”

This lovely creature may teach us many life-lessons of wisdom, love, and industry, but just three thoughts will suffice for the present—its *strength*, its *song*, and its *service*. These three keys will open to us some of the secrets of the Thrush's happy bird life and guide us to blessings for our own. These three qualities all our little folks need. *Strength* to serve the Lord ; *song* to praise the Lord ; and *service* to please the Lord. This makes heaven upon earth.

### 1. **The Thrush's Strength.**

This beautiful bird is particularly vigorous in all its operations of nesting, feeding, and singing—a living picture of health, happiness, and hope. Four things help to make the thrush a strong, lively bird—early rising, fresh air, good food, and a busy life. These are the things in human life also which give health, strength, and vigour both to body and mind.

“ Early to bed, and early to rise,  
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”

And if we would be spiritually strong and happy we need, like the thrush, to be *awake*, *bright*, and *active*. Early light (*Ps.* xc. 14), living



breath (*John* xx. 22), heavenly food (*John* vi. 35), and plenty to do (*Rom.* xii. 11). "I love them that love Me; and those that seek me *early* shall find me" (*Prov.* viii. 17). Awake with the thrush, sing in the sunshine, feed on good food, and "Work while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (*John* ix. 4). The thrush rises early and seeks first opportunities, and is rewarded with food and blessing. Let us imitate his good sense.

## 2. The Thrush's Song.

This bright musician of the woods is one of the most popular of our feathered friends, and its voice is one of the sweetest to be found amongst our British song birds. Its notes are clear, mellow, bold, and vigorous, and always strike a responsive chord in the breast of every listener. It generally commences its singing in January, and with the exception of moulting time, it is heard throughout the whole year; early morning and evening twilight are the times it sings the sweetest. A morning psalm of praise and an evening hymn of thanksgiving, are the daily practice of the lively thrush. It warbles, trills, and sings with all its soul to praise its Maker, and reminds the whole creation that God is good. The suggested lesson to us from the singing thrush is, "Praise the Lord." Do it *heartily*, *happily*, and *habitually*. Sing that the Lord may be glorified. These are the features



of true Christian praise—holy heartiness (*Eph.* v. 19), joyful happiness (*Ps.* c. 1, 2), and habitual brightness (*Heb.* xiii. 15). Singing with melody in the heart, fruit on the lips, and testimony in the life. But only saved souls can sing the songs of Zion. Can we sing them? If not, Jesus can save us by His grace, and tune us at once for this happy service.

“And hark! how blithe the thrush sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher.  
Come forth into the light of things,  
Let nature be your teacher.”

### 3. The Thrush's Service.

It is a very mistaken notion that these lovely birds are sent into the world simply to sing, steal fruit, and plague gardeners. Every one of these feathered friends has an important and useful mission in life, which it fills so happily. It is to help to keep the balance of power in this busy world, to cheer and assist busy workers in their weary toil, and to glorify their Maker. The *Thrush* is one of the most useful of these active workers. It keeps down the pests in the garden, protects the fruit, catches the early worm, clears the orchard of snails, and makes itself generally useful to agriculturists. True the Thrush sometimes takes a little fruit, but then it thinks it has a legitimate right to a share of the good things which it does so much towards preserving. The benefits it confers upon the gardens are far more



than the damage it does. It is a sign of progress that men understand this fact better.

The strong useful *Thrush* seems to say to us : "Seek to fill your place in life, so as to glorify the Master. Make your life a blessing to others, and do your service with cheerfulness and faithfulness." This is wise counsel : "Serve the Lord with diligence" (*Prov.* x. 4 ; *2 Peter* iii. 14), "with cheerfulness" (*Ps.* c. 2 ; *Luke* i. 74), "and with constancy" (*Luke* i. 75). Blessing and reward will be sure to follow (*Ps.* cxxvi. 6 ; *John* iv. 36 ; *Gal.* vi. 9). Let us be kind and generous to all the birds, and emulate both their song and service in the spirit of that beautiful poem by Coleridge :—

"He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man, and bird, and beast ;  
He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small ;  
For the dear Lord Who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

## **The Cuckoo: A Warning of Selfishness.**

This annual visitor is always welcome to our shores, and most of our Tiny Folks have heard the peculiar song of the Cuckoo. Its marvellous voice, mysterious habits, and lonely life make this bird an object of real wonder and special interest to all. The first appearance of this friend is always a time of brightness and hope,



as from time immemorial it has been associated with the advent of Spring, the birth-time of flowers, and the promise of summer and sunshine. No wonder its advent is hailed with delight and gratitude both by old and young. Almost every locality in the country has its poetical reference to the visit of the Cuckoo, of which the following is perhaps the commonest :—

“ In April come he will,  
In May he sings all day ;  
In June he changes his tune,  
In July away he'll fly.”

This wandering minstrel frequents localities of the most opposite description—the dreary fen, the wild heath, and the open, treeless moor, as well as those in which brush-wood abounds, and the well wooded hedge-rows of the best cultivated districts. The habits of the Cuckoo are most peculiar, especially the strange instinct which forbids it to build its own nest, instructs it to lay its eggs in some other bird's nest, and then leaves to others the responsibility of bringing up its young. This is one of the deep secrets of nature. Truly, the works of God are wonderful, and this interesting bird can teach us useful lessons of forethought, wisdom, and watchfulness. To help our memories we will arrange our thoughts as follows, and consider the Cuckoo as a *Welcome Visitor*, a *Lonely Songster*, and a *Restless Wanderer*.



**1. The Cuckoo is a Welcome Visitor.**

Have you heard the Cuckoo yet? How often that question is asked by one's friends or neighbours in the country. Hearing the first Cuckoo and seeing the first Swallow are always events of great interest and joy, especially to the young folks. The presence of the Cuckoo is a sermon, its song a call, and its visit an inspiration of hope. It illustrates and explains the precious words of Scripture: "For, lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come." *Song of Sol.* ii. 11, 12.

"Thrice welcome, darling of the spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No bird, but an invisible thing,  
A voice, a mystery."

The Cuckoo is also a witness to the faithfulness of God, by its regular visits to our land as the *seasons* roll round. Has not the Lord said: "Seed time and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter shall not cease" (*Gen.* viii. 22). He is a messenger of love to call us to activity and hope. He seems to say, "Be awake;" "Hurry up;" "Look alive;" summer will soon be gone, and "He that gathereth in summer is a wise son, but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame" (*Prov.* x. 5). Yes, the counsel of this flying visitor is, Praise the Lord for His faithfulness. Be active and hopeful. Live in the sunshine. Rejoice in the light and



Witness for God. Opportunities are for eternity, but not to eternity.

“Thus may we study nature’s book,  
To make us wise indeed ;  
And pity those who only look  
At what they cannot read.

## 2. The Cuckoo is a Lonely Songster.

The more we know of this curious bird, the more disappointed we feel at its selfish peculiar habits, and no wonder it is very much left to wander alone. Its neighbours at first are not unkindly disposed towards it, but finding their friendliness is repaid only by selfish ingratitude and cruelty, they leave it alone, and keep out of its way, for selfishness is the essence of the Cuckoo’s life. It begins its life as an intruder in another bird’s nest, and grows up to take advantage of its best friends, therefore *Loneliness* is the just reward of its selfish life. There are three or four features of the Cuckoo’s character we must avoid. *Self-love*, *Self-will*, *Self-seeking*, and *Self-praise*, and perhaps it is intended to be a beacon of warning to us against these evils. In any case do not let us imitate the Cuckoo in this respect, or loneliness, loss, and disappointment will be our reward. Let us note the warning of the Cuckoo, and follow the teaching of the Bible upon this point, and there the Lord Jesus says, “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it” (*Mark* viii. 35). This is



the principle of the true and happy life—denying self, serving Christ, and living for others. The life of Jesus is our example: “He humbled Himself” (*Phil.* ii. 8); “Pleased not Himself” (*Rom.* xv. 3); and then He “Gave Himself” (*1 Tim.* ii. 6). His life of love was a life of blessing and victory for us, and our lives of obedience to Him may be lives of glory to Him, happiness to ourselves, and blessing to others. It is grand if we can truly sing, “None of self and all of Thee,” that is a far better song than the Cuckoo’s, and will bring more peace and rest.

### **3. The Cuckoo is a Restless Wanderer.**

About the end of July the Cuckoo is off to another part of the world. Its visit is a very short one; it is only a passing wanderer. It sings its song, teaches its lessons, calls us to service, and then passes on to some other clime. This seems rather a melancholy feature of this bird’s life. No home of his own; no family gatherings to cheer him in his loneliness; and no place of rest—always on the go. There are numbers of people, both old and young, who are like the Cuckoo in this respect, lonely wanderers without home, without rest, without God, without Christ, and no hope in the world (*Eph.* ii. 12). Our little folks who are Christians, are those who have been sought, found, and saved by Jesus, and turned from weary wanderers into



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happy singing pilgrims, and now they can praise the Saviour, not with the monotone of the Cuckoo, but with the sweetness of the Nightingale. *Matt.* xxi. 16; *Ps.* cxix. 54.

There are a few lines by our friend Mr. Luff which we must insert here.

“Fickle friend, I hear thee calling,  
Now the sunny woods rejoice ;  
But when Autumn leaves were falling,  
Where was then thy cheery voice ?

Thou did'st leave us : thou did'st wander,  
Wander to a fairer clime.  
Earthly friends—oh, let us ponder,  
They may treat us so in time.

When the buds of hope are springing,  
When the flowers bestrew our way ;  
When the birds of joy are singing  
Through the gladsome golden day.

Then a thousand friends will meet us,  
In our pleasures they rejoice :  
And amid those pleasures greet us  
Hailing us with hearty voice.

But should rising storms sweep o'er us,  
Blossoms fade and pleasures die :  
Providential Winter try us,  
Friends like these take wing and fly.”

*The Swallow: A Type of Pilgrimage.*

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The Swallow is one of the most welcome of all our spring visitors—a summer companion and friend, and a real happy useful little protector. The self-same pair of birds, apparently, so fre-



quently coming back to the self-same nest, seem to be almost like members of the family, returning from a temporary absence.

Its advent to our shores is always the signal of hope and joy, so thoroughly is the Swallow identified with our idea of summer, that a picture of English summer life without it would be as incomplete as a winter scene without the Robin Redbreast. Everybody loves the Swallow. It always makes friends amongst us, and owing, no doubt, to its domesticated habits, confiding nature, and useful harmless life, enjoys a greater immunity from illtreatment and interference than is accorded to the majority of the feathered tribes.

In early spring our little folks delight to think and talk and sing of the coming of the Swallow.

“The little comer’s coming, the comer o’er the sea ;  
The comer of the summer, all the sunny days to be.”

Yes, coming to be busy, to be happy, and to be useful.

The Hebrews call the Swallow *Deror*, or “The Bird of Freedom,” and in the bird-world the Swallow is the very ideal of liberty, and with its quick eye, strong wing, and fork-like tail, and sharp, zigzag flight, is the very picture of loving life on wing; a real Swift, Wise, Attractive, Loyal, Lively, Obedient Witness for its Maker.

There are three or four passages of Scripture which call our attention to the Swallow’s wise instinct, swift wing, and homely prudence. “Yea, the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed



times; and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the *Swallow*, observe the time of their coming" (*Jer.* viii. 7). "As the bird by wandering, as the *Swallow* by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come" (*Prov.* xxvi. 2). "Yea, the Sparrow hath found an house, and the *Swallow* a nest for herself, where she may lay her young" (*Psalms* lxxxiv. 2). "Like a Crane or a *Swallow* so did I chatter" (*Isa.* xxxviii. 14). Yes, *David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hezekiah*, all observed the interesting habits of the *Swallow*, and as they heard its shrill chatter, and watched its active life and service, they saw illustrations of their own experiences, feelings, and hopes. A short meditation upon the habits of these busy little creatures may also aid us in our Christian life and service; therefore we will consider the *Swallow* as a Little *Protector*, a Little *Preacher*, and a Little *Pilgrim*.

### 1. A Little Protector.

In the good providence of God there is a wonderful balance of power in nature, and all for the blessing and comfort of man. And most of our feathered friends render us great service by keeping the atmosphere pure and free from increasing insects, which would overload it. Each tribe has its respective duties to perform in the economy of nature, and it is an undoubted fact that if the birds were all swept off the face of the earth, men could not live upon it, and vegetation



would wither and die. The *Swallow*, Swift, and Nightjar are the guardians of the atmosphere, therefore we can freely breathe the air, enjoy the sunlight, and follow our respective duties.

This special service of the *Swallow* reminds us of similar duties in a higher sphere. The Christian in his life and service is a protector, a real life preserver. The salt of the earth to purify it (*Matt.* v. 13), a light to guide it (*Matt.* xiii. 16), and a witness to warn it (*Acts* i. 8); and the best way to protect men from sin and evil is to lead them to Jesus, for in Him there is safety, purity, and security, and by grace we can all be as useful in the higher sphere as the *Swallow* is in the lower; we can be life protectors.

*Joseph* was a wise protector (*Gen.* xlv. 5). *David* was a brave protector (*1 Sam.* xxii. 2). *Elijah* was a faithful protector (*1 Kings* xvii. 16). *Obadiah* was a thoughtful protector (*1 Kings* xviii. 4). *Paul* was a friendly protector (*Philemon* i. 17, 18). With the grace and spirit of Jesus, and the activity of the *Swallow*, we can take summer brightness and blessing wherever we go. Let us try.

## 2. A Little Preacher.

The *Swallow* is one of God's travelling preachers on the wing, and a very smart, attractive, powerful preacher it is to every observant mind. It teaches us lessons of *wisdom*, *obedience*, and *praise*. The *Swallow* is wise to come at the



right time, to fly in the right direction, and to build in the right place ; all its movements are regulated by unfailing instinct, and in obedience to this power the Swallow appears in the spring and disappears in the autumn. "Yea, the Stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the *Swallow* observe the time of their coming" (*Jer.* viii. 7) ; and what instinct is to the bird, Divine grace and wisdom are to men, and the Swallow is a flying illustration of spiritual obedience and activity, and the four little sermons from this wonderful preacher are these:—Observe the right time (2 *Cor.* vi. 2), obey the right call (1 *Peter* v. 10), serve in the right spirit (*Ps.* c. 2), and build in the right place (*Ps.* lxxxiv. 3). In a place of safety, quietness, and rest, and this happy place for the soul to build for rest, peace, and eternal safety is on Jesus Himself, and the three great secrets of true happiness illustrated by the life of the Swallow are *knowledge, obedience, and service*. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (*John* xiii 17). The Lord make us wise to know His love, swift to do His will, and happy to praise His name.

### 3. A Little Pilgrim.

In the East, the Swallow bears the honoured name of "the Pilgrim." No country can claim the Swallow as its own. It is a bird of passage. It is an emblem of Pilgrimage, as well as Liberty

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and Obedience. In France it is spoken of as "the Jew" because of its wandering habits; and it is said to have been used as a crest by the crusader pilgrims to symbolise the fact that they too were strangers in a strange land. So the Swallow in its migratory habits is a preacher in its own way of "the Pilgrim's progress from this world of sorrow to that which is to come—the home of light and love." Every Christian man, woman, boy, and girl is a Pilgrim going home. They are Saved Pilgrims (*Heb. xi. 13*); Separated Pilgrims (*1 Peter ii. 11*); and Singing Pilgrims (*Ps. cxix. 54*). The Swallow is a bird of light, and cannot bear the darkness and cold of gloomy winter, and always journeys towards the sun light, and this is the path and passage of the spiritual Pilgrim hastening to the Light of God. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (*Prov. iv. 18*). The lessons from the Swallow are, *be wise, be active, be useful, and be happy*. So let us seek to live, and work, and hope, till we dwell in the Light of God, in the summer of His love, and in the home of His rest.

Two verses from our poetical friend, Mr. W. Luff, shall finish our meditation on the Swallow.

"I never yet have seen thee, fair, free bird,  
    *A little prisoner*, captive to man's hand.  
Would I could say that I had never heard  
    Of God's free birds of passage to Heaven's land  
Being the world's sad captives, in the cage,  
The golden age of this ensnaring cage.



Beware, ye free born birds, for nets are spread  
To catch your wings. Know that God made you free :  
And free ye are, when by His Spirit led ;  
But sorry plight is your's if snared ye be.  
Fly high. Oh, settle not on earth ; but live  
Free to depart when God the word shall give."

## *The Nightingale: A Pattern of Song.*

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The Nightingale has become proverbial for the beauty of its song ; both poets and naturalists have been alike eloquent in its praise. Its music is the standard of perfection, and to be told we sing like a Nightingale is to get the highest praise for our vocal efforts. By general consent it is crowned the chief of nature's musicians. When listening to the Nightingale, Isaac Walton said, "Lord, what music hast Thou prepared Thy *Saints* in Heaven, when Thou affordest bad men such music upon earth ?" We heartily endorse the sentiment, and rejoice in the prospect of sweeter songs above. All the "Tiny Folks" who are trusting Jesus are, like the Nightingales, "Singing Pilgrims," hastening to a sunnier clime.

The Nightingale is one of our migratory birds. It generally arrives in England about the early part of April, the males preceding the females by about a week, at times, even a fortnight. On the arrival of the latter, building operations quickly commence, during which time they are in full song, and happy *Song* and *Service* go on more or less to the middle of June; but as the Autumn



approaches these pleasant visitors begin to move towards the South, to spend the Winter in a warmer atmosphere, and they leave us to battle with the Winter's storms without their charming songs. These little interesting friends do much to fill the world with sweetest music, to remove the dreariness of night, to cheer us in our busy toil, and remind us of our Maker's goodness, love, and care, whilst they teach and illustrate for us many important lessons of Service, and especially Song Service.

The Nightingale is a very sensitive, shy bird, of a retiring disposition, and does not willingly expose itself to observation. Yet it is vigilant in all its habits, and is always busy in its own sphere, a bright object lesson of humble plodding industry, but its song is the special feature of its life. The ministry of this friend reminds us of three things worth noting: The Gift of Song, Sweetness of Song, and Seasons of Song.

#### **1. The Nightingale shows us the Gift of Song.**

Wonderful indeed is the strength of the Nightingale's little instrumental throat. God has given it a vocal organ, which (in proportion to its size) is much stronger than any other bird. It seems to possess a special gift, grace, and gesture to make it nature's brightest singer, and it is with us as with this bird and others. The gift, the grace, and the power of real song are all from the Lord. Every Christian can say, "The Lord



is my strength and song" (*Exod.* xv. 2). He first saves us by His grace, fills us with His love, puts a new song into our mouths, and then helps us to sing to His glory, and to reach, attract, and win others to Himself (*Psalms* xl. 1, 4). The gift and power to sing of redeeming grace here is developing and perfecting for the eternal song above. Yes, our golden harp is for heaven.

"'Tis strung and tuned for endless years,  
And formed by power divine,  
To sound in God the Father's ears,  
No other name but Thine."

This precious gift of Song gets all the stronger and sweeter with use, and as the musician keeps his instrument in the warm to preserve its tone, so let us keep our souls near the fire of God's love, that we may bless the Lord at all times (*Psalms* xxxiv. 1).

## **2. The Nightingale illustrates the Sweetness of Song.**

For sweetness, pathos, and power, none of nature's songs can equal that of the Nightingale, and one writer says, "With its fascinating, unearthly melody, it is a picture of the Saint, filled with the Spirit of God, aspiring after higher perfection and praise." Oh, the sweetness of the song of grace in the souls of all the saved. It is the melody of the heart (*Eph.* v. 19), the joy of the soul (*Ps.* c. 2), the fruit of the lips (*Heb.* xiii. 15), the testimony of life (*Ps.* xl. 3), the delight of God (*Ps.* l. 23), and the earnest of heaven



(*Rev.* v. 9). Can we all sing this song? If not, why not? There is no greater power to comfort, cheer, and sustain the soul in life's troubles and sorrows than the sweet song of grace in the heart. I read the other day of a dear man of God who was suddenly seized with a malady from which he could obtain no relief, except by undergoing a dangerous operation. He had to go to London: this was a great trial for him; he had to say farewell with a very heavy heart to all his family, not knowing that he would see them again. Just as he was stepping into the cab to go to the station his little girl looked into his face and sang out the chorus of a well-known hymn:—

“Ask the Saviour to help you,  
Comfort, strengthen, and keep you;  
He is willing to aid you,  
He will carry you through.”

This little hymn singer was God's little messenger of comfort to her afflicted father. He looked up to the Lord with a new faith and hope. He went through the operation, got better, returned home to praise God for His goodness in sending that happy song to strengthen him.

### 3. **The Nightingale teaches the Season of Song.**

*Sing*, says the Nightingale, when your song will be best heard, most appreciated, and of the greatest value. The wise man says, “To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” And the habits of



everything in nature testify to this fact. So there is a special time for all the birds to do their work, build their nests, and sing their songs, and the Nightingale selects, by choice or instinct, the time of Nature's sleep to sing its sweetest songs. So with Christian singers there are particular seasons of song and service. Special *times, places, and circumstances* help to make the Christian's song *clear, mellow, sweet, and helpful*. The Lord gives all His saints, like the Nightingale, "Songs in the night."

**In the Night of Trouble, a Song of Faith.** *Job*  
xxxv. 10.

**In the Night of Suffering, a Song of Hope.** *Psalms*  
xlii. 8.

**In the Night of Meditation, a Song of Peace.**  
*Psalms* lxxvii. 6.

**In the Night of Sorrow, a Song of Joy.** *Matt.*  
xxvi. 30.

**In the Night of Pain, a Song of Praise.** *Acts*  
xvi. 25.

"The Lord's singers have oftener been found in prisons than in palaces, and nobler songs have been sung at the stake than on the throne; Joseph in his dungeon, Daniel in his den, and Bunyan in his prison, sang the quiet songs of trust and hope, and David composed his finest psalms in cave and glen." Let us all sing like the Nightingale, "Oh give thanks unto the Lord



for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever."

A devoted French lady of the seventeenth century, long cruelly imprisoned for conscience sake in the terrible Bastille, spoke of herself thus:—

"A little bird I am,  
Shut from the fields of air,  
Yet in my cage I sit and sing  
To Him who placed me there.  
Well pleased a prisoner to be,  
Because, my God, it pleases Thee.

The Lord give us all the season and strength for service, the gifts and grace for song, and the mind and sweetness for Heaven, *there* our happy songs will sound for ever and ever.

### ***The Skylark: A Symbol of Joy.***

The Skylark is a modest and unpretending little creature, but it occupies a very prominent position amongst our British birds. Its cheery voice and soaring song are some of the greatest charms we have in this busy world of ours, and they lift our hearts up out of the dreary regions of earth into the realms of light and love, and bid us praise and glorify our God. So soon as the sun bursts forth to scatter the gloomy clouds and gild the heavens with light and hope, up springs the little Lark from his lowly bed among the grass, and, rejoicing as he goes, speeds heavenward to give thanks to the great Giver of a new day. Higher and higher he mounts till he seems to be lost to human ken, still the music of



his tiny throat fills the broad expanse with praise and joy. No wonder Shakespeare calls this lovely bird "The herald of morning," and Shelley "The Heavenly bird."

"Higher still and higher,  
From the earth thou springest,  
Like a cloud of fire;  
The blue deep thou wingest,  
And singing still doth soar;  
And soaring ever singest."

The Lark is a native of all the European countries, is well distributed in every part of Great Britain, and is one of the best known of our feathered friends. Its nest is built of dried bents of hay, grass, or fine fibrous roots, and may be found in a slight indentation in the ground. The Skylark is a most devoted parent, and exhibits the greatest anxiety for the safety and welfare of its young. Thank God for giving us such a sweet songster.

### 1. **The Skylark is a Humble Bird.**

Larks are lowly, humble creatures in most of their habits. It is very rarely that they alight on a tree, or even on a low bush, or wall, or hedge. They pass the day (except when soaring), and roost at night, upon the ground. *Hardiness*, *Humbleness*, and *Homeliness* are three of the special qualities of these interesting little friends. Larks are of strong constitution, sprightly in all their motions, and happy in their song and service—an excellent picture of gracious, humble, earnest Christians. "As the Lark that soars the



highest, builds her nest the lowest ; the Nightingale that sings so sweetly sings in the shade when all things rest ; so the holiest Christians are the humblest." The valley of humility is a fruitful spot, the garment of humility is a gracious garb, and the spirit of humility is a precious treasure (*Prov.* xxii. 4 ; *Luke* xviii. 4 ; *1 Peter* v. 5, 6). The Bible pictures of humility are as attractive as the Skylark, lilies for their purity, babes for their simplicity, and little children for their reality. *Matt.* xi. 25.

**The Bible Pattern for Humility is Jesus Himself.**  
*Phil.* ii. 5.

**The Bible Picture for Humility is a Little Child.**  
*Matt.* xviii. 2.

**The Bible Precept for Humility is the Word of God.** *1 Peter* v. 6.

**The Bible Power for Humility is the Word of Christ.** *Matt.* v. 3.

" He that is down need fear no fall  
He that is low no pride ;  
He that is humble ever shall  
Have God to be His Guide."

Let us be like the Lark, keep low, be on the watch, and let the world go by ; and at the right time we shall get above the mist and fogs, and sing in the sunshine.

## 2. The Skylark is a Happy Bird.

The Lark is one of the happiest of our native songsters. Happy in its lowly home ; happy in



its little family ; and happy in its busy life ; but it is the Skylark's song which best expresses its joy. "Song," says one, "is the speech of feeling," and the Lark seems to put all its best feelings into its song—the feelings of love, gratitude, joy, and praise. Happy little creatures, they fill our world with music, our fields with melody, and our lives with cheer. They are certainly sent to lift our hearts above, and teach us lessons of happiness and hope. It is very good of God to give us so many living illustrations of happiness and joy in the natural world, but the great secret of spiritual and eternal happiness is given us in the Bible. Those are happy, whether young or old, who are saved (*Deut.* xxxiii. 29), who belong to God (*Ps.* cxliv. 15), who fear the Lord (*Ps.* cxxviii. 1, 2), who find wisdom (*Prov.* iii. 13), who trust the Lord (*Prov.* xvi. 20), who obey Jesus (*John* xiii. 17). All who receive Jesus possess all these blessings for eternity, and they can pray, and trust, and sing, and shout, and work, and wait till Jesus comes.

A minister once called to see an earnest Christian woman, and enquired about the state of her mind, she replied, "Happy, happy!" "What makes you so happy?" he asked. She said, "I have Christ there," laying her hand on the Bible ; "and Christ here," pressing it to her heart ; "and Christ there;" pointing towards Heaven. There is this precious treasure in



Jesus ready for all our tiny folks if they will receive Christ. Why not now?

### 3. **The Skylark is a Homely Bird.**

Homely in the sense of being simple, modest, and unassuming. Plain in its plumage, domesticated in its habits, and affectionate in its nature. A real lover of its home and family. If the Lark does not sing "Home, sweet Home," certainly it feels it. The Lark is not such a showy bird as some, but its *spirit*, *sense*, and *song* are superior to many. There is a wise distribution of gifts in God's great world, and from our plain, sober-coloured British birds we have the most lovely songs, whilst others with very fine feathers have no song at all; so it is in the higher sphere of thought and life. Yes; in the world of nature and in the kingdom of grace there is a great variety of gifts, "but the same Spirit," that is the same Spirit to teach, to inspire, and to enable us to use our gifts to the glory of God (1 Cor. xii. 4, 8; Rom. xii. 6; 1 Peter iv. 10). All have gifts; what are ours?

Humble living; quiet testimony; earnest speaking; helpful teaching; soaring song; patient suffering, or active service. Let us ask the Lord to tell us what they are, and then seek grace to use them with all our hearts, with a cheerful, bright, happy spirit like the Lark.



*The Partridge: An Emblem of Fear.* 157

"The bird that sings on highest wing,  
Builds on the ground her lowly nest ;  
And she that doth most sweetly sing,  
Sings in the shade when all things rest ;  
In Lark and Nightingale we see  
What honour hath humility."

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"Ethereal minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?  
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye  
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?  
Thy nest, which thou canst drop into at will ;  
Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount daring warbler ! that love-prompted strain  
"Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond,  
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain ; . . .  
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam,  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home."

*Wordsworth.*

**The Partridge: An Emblem of Fear.**

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This wonderful bird is inseparably connected with our English autumn. It is one of the most valuable of our British birds, is eagerly sought after by the keen-eyed sportsman, and numbers of them have to suffer death at the end of the year. Yes, the warning note for the Partridge is,

"Remember, remember,  
The first of September."

The Partridge is to be found plentifully throughout the whole of the British Isles. It is said to belong to Europe, but it is also comparatively common in many parts of Asia and Africa. Most



people are acquainted with the habits of this bird. It lives in the fields, feeds upon grain, seeds, worms, and insects, therefore must be very useful to the farmer as well as valuable to the sportsman. No doubt Partridges do far more good than they do harm. They generally move in coveys, varying in number from twelve to thirty: perhaps they instinctively keep together to be able to warn each other of approaching danger, or for mutual sympathy and help. If so, they are object-lessons to teach us the value of brotherly love, mutual help, and cheering friendship.

Naturalists tell us many remarkable stories of the exceeding cunning of the Partridge; its quickness in apprehending danger, its cleverness in hiding, its rapid movements along the ground—often in a circuitous route to defeat the craft of the sportsman, and its silent, skilful contrivances, to avoid detection by its enemies. The art of the Partridge is familiar to every sportsman, and excites admiration in all lovers of nature. We may call this cunning, special instinct, or reason, or what we wish, but it is nothing less than a special gift God has given to these poor birds to enable them to protect themselves from danger and death, and is a distinct mark of the good providence of our God over all His works.

There are two little windows in the Bible which let in special light upon the exposed life of this interesting bird. Two verses, which show us



the disappointments, dangers, and uncertainties peculiar to the Partridge's career: "As when one doth hunt a Partridge in the mountains" (1 *Sam.* xxvi. 20); "As the Partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not" (*Jer.* xvii. 11). Danger, Disappointment, and Death seem to be the fate of the poor Partridge, and it is a sad picture of many of the features of human life. The Partridge is *Hunted* by its enemies, *Disappointed* in its labour, and is in *Danger* of death. Such are the sorrows of human life; but our God of Love can turn persecution into peace, disappointment into blessing, and death into life.

### 1. The Partridge is Hunted by its Enemies.

"As when one doth hunt a Partridge on the mountains." No poor creature is more hunted and worried than the Partridge, especially in the autumn of the year.

King David felt that his life was hunted by Saul, like the sportsman seeks the life of the Partridge, and in the above passage expresses his heart's sorrow. Numbers of God's faithful people have been hunted like this for their lives by wicked and cruel enemies; they have been hunted from their homes into the mountains, caves, dens, and deserts, without shelter, or rest, or peace. The Puritans in England, the Covenanters in Scotland, and the Hugenots in France. In every place where there are true witnesses for God, *there* there will be enemies to



persecute them. This world is like a dreary desert to the child of God, and the great enemy of souls and his agents are seeking the life of every believer. "Be vigilant," says the Apostle, "because your adversary—the devil—as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 *Peter* v. 8). And Jesus Himself tells us the world will hate us. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you" (*John* xv. 18). "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (*John* xvi. 33). How glad the poor Partridge would be for a sure refuge from its pursuers! Thank God we have one in Jesus, and He will never fail us; let us trust Him. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe" *Prov.* xviii. 10.

All who are trusting Jesus for time and eternity, can gladly sing—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe on His gentle breast;  
There by His love o'ershaded,  
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

## **2. The Partridge is Disappointed in its Labour.**

"As the Partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not" (*Jer.* xvii. 11). Some say this disappointment of the Partridge is the result of carelessness or covetousness; either the eggs are placed in an exposed spot, where the foot of man or beast can crush them, or the hen tries



to sit upon too many at once and therefore spoils a great number, and they come to nothing. Anyhow, the practical lesson and application is clear enough. "So he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (*Jer.* xvii. 11). Greed, covetousness, disappointment, folly, and shame, are the sad fruits of wicked selfishness. The disappointed Partridge is the Holy Spirit's picture of the evil results of selfishness and sin. "Take heed," says Jesus, "and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (*Luke* xii. 15). This is the counsel of Jesus, which He illustrates by the sad experience of the *rich fool* (*Luke* xii. 20). Then He gives us the application and warning, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God" (*Luke* xii. 21). Let us find our heart's treasure in Christ, and in that which is eternal, in the peace of God, holiness of life, and devoted service for the Master, then no labour will be lost, and no effort a disappointment, and all will be joy and blessing for ever and ever.

### 3. The Partridge is in Danger of Death.

The history of the poor Partridge seems to be associated with worry, persecution, danger, and death. From its very birth the sentence of death seems to hang over it, and if it dreams it must be about dogs, guns, bags, etc., and when the first

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of September comes, then, according to the almanack, the execution begins. This is the darkest month in the year to the Partridge ; it is hunted to death, but even in this aspect of the bird's sorrow its experience is a parable of human danger. It is true,

“Dangers stand thick through all the ground,  
To push us to the tomb,  
And fierce diseases wait around,  
To hurry mortals home.”

Death is the result of the fall (*Rom.* v. 12); the wages of sin (*Rom.* vi. 23); and the fruit of unbelief (*John* iii. 18). There is life and safety only in Jesus (1 *John* v. 12). “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (1 *John* v. 11).

“Oh what a Saviour—that He died for me ;  
From condemnation, He hath made me free ;  
‘He that believeth on the Son,’ saith He,  
‘Hath everlasting life.’”

## **The Blackbird: An Illustration of Service.**

The Blackbird is one of the fine specimens of our beautiful British song birds. A shy, sensitive, cautious creature, and one of our most favourite grove musicians. With its neat form, yellow bill, sable plumage, sweet song, and active life, who does not welcome and love it? It is a spring minstrel, a summer worker, an autumn protector, and a winter friend ; a real jovial, joyful, useful fellow, and one of the most lively of the feathered tribe.



*The Blackbird: An Illustration of Service.* 163

This noble bird is found in all parts of England; it frequents gardens, groves, shrubberies, hedgerows, and copse, in more or less abundance. It is, with us, a permanent resident, and prefers the more cultivated districts to the wild part of the country. In winter it draws near the neighbourhood of houses and towns, but generally keeps beneath the sheltering protection of trees, hedges, or bushes, and always moves with great care and caution, and should it be suddenly alarmed or disturbed, it immediately takes wing with a loud chattering cry, a kind of signal it gives to others to beware of danger. Indeed, so startling is this signal that the Blackbird might properly be called the sentinel of the grove, for it often warns others of the near approach of enemies, and gives them time to escape in safety.

This interesting bird, like the rest of the feathered tribe, supplies us with abundant illustration of active Christian life and service; but we will only select a few points of its special habits to guide us to our spiritual lessons, and note its Secluded Life, Sweet Song, and Special Service as symbols of the Believer's Safety, Separation, and Testimony, in this busy world of toil and care.

**1. Its Secluded Life.**

The Blackbird is naturally a restless, cautious, shy creature, and loves seclusion. It is not what



is called a gregarious bird, seldom more than a pair being seen together; it is the rule for them to keep separate and exclusive, but they are very bright, lively, and cheerful in all their habits, and generally live much longer than any other birds. These special features of the Blackbird's life serve as illustrations of the true Christian's peculiar life. It is a *hidden* life, a *separate* life, and a *happy* life; and what this bird does by instinct, the true Christian does by *faith*, *choice*, and *obedience* to the command of the Lord, abides in the path of *separation*. The believer in Jesus is *hidden* for *safety* (Col. iii. 3); *separated* for *testimony* (2 Cor. vi. 17); and *happy* for *service* (Ps. xl. 3). If we would know what this secret, secluded, happy life is we must follow the direction of the Bible. "A man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest (*Is. xxxii. 2*). Such is the word of the Prophet; and the Psalmist who trusted the Lord, says, "Thou art my hiding-place" (*Ps. xxxii. 7*); and the Lord's people are called "His hidden ones" (*Ps. lxxxiii. 3*; *Ps. xxvii. 5*). Safety is the position (*Prov. xviii. 10*); Separation is the path (*Rev. xviii. 4*); and Happiness is the fruit (*Ps. cxlvi. 5*) of trusting the Lord. We all, I hope, delight to sing—

"Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,  
Till the storm of life is past;  
Safe into the haven guide,  
Oh, receive my soul at last."



## 2. Its Sweet Song.

The Blackbird is one of our most charming songsters. Its song is somewhat similar to that of the Thrush, not in tone so much as in style and execution; its full flute-like notes almost rival the tones of the best of nature's songsters. It is a song of great vigour, variety, and sweetness, and is said to possess the thrill of the Thrush, the brightness of the Lark, and the sweetness of the Nightingale. It begins its song with the earliest dawn, and continues it at intervals throughout the day, even until the twilight, and till its own black plumage begins to fade into night. Its first morning notes are somewhat harsh and unmusical, but when the sun advances, and his red rays gild the sky, the sweet singer hails the glorious sight with a louder and more joyous strain, and after a refreshing summer shower it is heard at still greater advantage. Some have called the Blackbird a mocking-bird, because of its marvellous power of imitation. It has been known to crow like the cock in the farmyard, chatter like the magpie, caw like the crow, and successfully imitate the song of the nightingale. With this wonderful power of song, what a striking picture the Blackbird is of the happy, joyous Christian, singing the songs of grace in this busy world of varied experiences of sunshine and shade, darkness and light, sorrows and joys. Yes, the Spirit-taught and the Spirit-filled Christian can sing praises to the Lord



under all circumstances, like the Blackbird, sing continually, and with varied notes and power. But what are the songs the Christian sings?—

**The New Song of Life.** “Hath put a new song in my mouth.” *Ps.* xl. 3.

**The Lord’s Song of Praise.** “The Lord’s song in a strange land.” *Ps.* cxxxvii. 4.

**The Happy Song of Joy.** “Come before His presence with singing.” *Ps.* c. 2.

**The Salvation Song of Gratitude.** “With songs of deliverance.” *Ps.* xxxii. 7.

**The Spiritual Songs of Fellowship.** “Hymns and spiritual songs.” *Eph.* v. 19.

**The Pilgrim Songs of Gladness.** “Come to Zion with songs.” *Is.* xxxv. 10.

**The Redemption Song of Glory.** “And they sing the song.” *Rev.* xv. 3.

In the meantime, till the Glory land is reached, the Lord’s children are cheering each other in Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs, etc. (*Col.* iii. 16), and are making the world sing with gratitude and praise to Jesus. The Lark in the Heavens, the Nightingale in the shade, the Thrush in the tree, the Blackbird in the bush, and the Saint in the Church, are praising the Lord.

“My song shall be of Jesus,  
While pressing on my way,  
To reach the blissful region  
Of pure and perfect day.



*The Blackbird: An Illustration of Service.* 167

And when my soul shall enter,  
The gate of Eden fair,  
A song of praise to Jesus,  
I'll sing for ever there."

### 3. Its Special Service.

This denizen of the woods, in common with the rest of the Thrush family, fills a unique place in this busy world of work, and performs very useful service in a variety of ways, faithfully fulfilling its mission designed for it by the wise Creator. Like the Song-Thrush, although of incalculable worth for its destruction of caterpillars and insects that infest the fruit-garden and orchard, it makes the agriculturist pay for its services by its depredation when the fruits have ripened into maturity. It is very fond of cherries, strawberries, currants, gooseberries, etc., and if not watched very carefully often makes great havoc amongst these nice fruits; but it must never be forgotten that without the service of these strong vigilant birds the gardener would get no fruit at all, the trees would be smothered and killed by insects, which are destroyed by these busy workers, so that the little harm they do is far more than compensated by the good they do, and the more we know of their excellent qualities the more we shall thank God for the Blackbirds, and if we will study carefully their habits and continued activity they will teach us lessons of thrift, industry, and useful service. These happy birds seem to be the



living illustrations of the precepts of the Bible. Their wise forethought, vigilance, and perseverance seem to say to us, "Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." This, too, is the burden of Scripture counsel, Work, Work, Work.

"Oh, the good we all may do  
While the days are going by."

As saved ones it is our joy and privilege to serve the Lord always. We are saved to serve (*Ex.* vii. 16; *1 Thess.* i. 9); called to serve (*Matt.* xxi. 21, 28); cleansed to serve (*Heb.* ix. 14); fitted to serve (*Heb.* xii. 28). And shall be duly rewarded for all our faithful service for the Lord (*Heb.* vi. 10). Let us, then, serve the Lord with gladness (*Psa.* c. 2), and work till Jesus comes.

"Work, for the night is coming !  
Work, through the sunny noon :  
Fill brightest hours with labour,  
Rest comes sure and soon.  
Give every flying minute  
Something to keep in store :  
Work, for the night is coming  
When man works no more."

## **The Dove: An Image of Gentleness.**

---

There is a great variety of the Dove family, the Stock Dove, Rock Dove, Ring Dove, and Turtle Dove, and all associated with gentleness, purity, and peace; and these pleasing features of the Dove's character have furnished unailing



themes for preachers, poets, and philosophers, in every age, and its special affection and devotion to its mate is the admiration of all who are acquainted with its habits.

The Dove holds a very prominent place in the Bible: it is mentioned more frequently than any other bird, and is connected with many important events in sacred history, but especially with the safety of Noah (*Gen.* viii. 8, 10, 12), the Sacrifice of the Poor (*Lev.* i. 14), the Coming of the Spring (*Song of Solomon* ii. 12), and the Baptism, Teaching, and Service of the Lord Jesus. *Matt.* x. 16.

Its simplicity of character, comeliness of countenance, softness of eyes, sweetness of voice, richness of plumage, and gentleness of manner, are so many pictures of the grace, life, and testimony of every follower of the Lord Jesus. The different kinds of Dove supply us with a diversity of thought and illustration for the Christian life. Some build on the rock, some near the dwellings of men, and others are migratory and go on pilgrimage. All true Christians build on the rock Christ Jesus, cling close to the Saviour for protection, and are pilgrims going to glory, swift as the flying Dove. In the Scriptures we see the Dove as a messenger of peace, a picture of the Saviour's work, an emblem of the Holy Spirit, a guide to personal safety, and a pattern for individual service.



**1. The Dove as a Messenger of Peace. *Gen. viii. 11.***

Noah sent forth a Raven out of the ark, but it was too selfish and carnal to return to give any tidings of the outside world. Afterwards Noah sent out a *Dove*, and it wisely and quickly returned to report that the waters had not abated. Seven days after this Noah sent the Dove forth again, and in the evening it returned to Noah with an olive leaf in its mouth, as a witness to God's faithfulness, a token of God's peace, and a signal that all was right. How thankful and glad Noah must have been to receive this message of peace. And what a token of God's love it was. It meant for Noah and his family Light out of darkness, Life out of death, Peace out of storm, and Hope out of fear. So the Dove is a beautiful picture of the messenger of the Gospel peace, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, Jesus is the peace maker (*Col. i. 20*), the peace giver (*John xiv. 27*), and the peace blessing for every believing soul (*Rom. v. 1*), and every Christian can be like the *Dove* a messenger of peace to others, and with the olive leaf of Love and Life, we all may be God's living witnesses like the Dove from the ark. Let us try.

**2. The Dove as a Picture of the Saviour's Work.**

*Lev. i. 14, 17.*

None can come near to God, but by atonement, and we read, "It is the blood, that maketh atonement for the soul" (*Lev. xvii. 11*). The offerings



varied in Old Testament times, but all pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ and His perfect atonement for sin (1 *Peter* i. 18, 19; *Heb.* x. 14). The very poor people brought their Pigeons or Doves as offerings to the Lord, and these were accepted for them, a Type of the *Sacrifice, Substitution, and Salvation* perfected by Jesus for all who believe on Him. And now the message to all is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." So the Dove in this particular speaks to us of the Lord Jesus Himself. The value of Jesus, the work of Jesus, the salvation of Jesus, and the eternal hope for all through Jesus. Let us trust Him.

### 3. **The Dove as an Emblem of the Holy Spirit.** *Matt.* iii. 16.

"And He saw the Spirit of God descending like a Dove and lighting upon Him." The Dove with its gentle spirit, tender love, and harmless character is a most suitable type of the Holy Spirit's grace, power, and blessing. And this spirit and grace were given to the Lord Jesus Christ without measure (*John* iii. 34). Hence His gentle life, abounding love, gracious words, and Holy deeds. The Dove is a bird with many precious qualities—a picture of the Holy Spirit and His many graces. If we ask our Heavenly Father, He will give us this Heavenly Dove—the Holy Spirit—and all His graces (*Luke* xi. 13; *Gal.* v. 22). Let us ask Him.



"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,  
With all Thy quickening powers ;  
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,  
And that shall kindle ours."

4. **The Dove as a Guide to Personal Safety.** *Jer.*  
xlvi. 28.

"Dwell in the Rock, and be like the Dove."

This shows the special wisdom of the Dove, to make its home and dwelling-place in the strong rock. The Lord Jesus is the "Rock of Ages," and all those who are wise build and hide and rest in Him for eternity. Christ is the Foundation Rock (*Matt.* vii. 25); the Refreshing Rock (*Ex.* xvii. 6); the Sheltering Rock (*Is.* xxxii. 2); and the Eternal Rock (*Is.* xxvi. 4, margin). If we are wise like the Dove, we shall hide in this Rock, and be safe for ever.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee."

2. **The Dove as a Pattern for Individual Service.**  
*Matt.* x. 16.

"Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as Doves." Simplicity and prudence, grace blending the subtle with the gentle, are the qualities needed for the service of the Master. As workers for God, sent forth in His Name, we need the gentleness of the Dove and the wisdom of the Serpent. The two graces are needed for Life, Testimony, and Service (*Rom.* xvi. 19; *Eph.* v. 15; *Col.* iv. 5, 6). The best example for this harmless character is the Lord Jesus Himself;



for He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (*Heb.* vii. 26). This spiritual harmlessness is *Gentleness*, the spirit of Christ (*1 Cor.* x. 1). *Love*, the fruit of the Spirit (*Gal.* v. 22); and *Holiness*, the mark of a true witness for Christ (*Phil.* ii. 15). This special heavenly grace brings *Greatness* (*Psa.* xviii. 35), *Graciousness* (*James* iii. 17), *Victory*, and *Glory* (*Rom.* xvi. 20). With this Dove-like spirit and Christ-like power, we can go forth in the name of Jesus "as sheep in the midst of wolves," with perfect safety and sure of success and blessing; rejoicing that we are counted worthy to witness for Jesus, and glad that He is with us always to share our joys as well as our sorrows.

"The Dove returning bore the mark  
Of earth restored to the long labouring ark;  
The relics of mankind, secure of rest,  
Oped every window to receive the guest,  
And the fair bearer of the message blessed."

## **The Eagle: A Sermon on Obedience.**

---

The Eagle is a wonderful bird; it loves to build its nest on the highest crag, and soar into the sunny heavens beyond the ken of man; and it is not an easy matter to get very near its native haunts and dwelling-place. "She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place" (*Job* xxxix. 28). The Eagle is commonly called the king of birds, and no doubt it is superior in many respects to any



of the feathered tribe. Its length of life, noble flight, clear sight, and wonderful strength far surpass the power of any other bird. It is a bold, majestic, noble creature, and no wonder that several nations have selected the Eagle as the ensign and emblem of their power and glory.

The Eagle, too, is one of the Bible pictures of the Christian life, activity, and progress, and its interesting habits are full of light and lessons for every follower of Christ. Its remarkable instinct, its strong affection, its searching eye, its power of wing, and its lofty flight all illustrate some distinct feature of our spiritual life and aspirations. And if we will search the Scriptures upon the life and habits of the Eagle, it will preach us sermons, teach us lessons, give us warnings, and safely guide us to great spiritual truth. We shall have a sermon on wise obedience, a symbol of renewed youth, a sign of increasing strength, a simile of tender care, and a signal of coming woe. These thoughts shall guide us to our lessons. We see in the Eagle's habits—

**1. A Sermon on Wise Obedience.** *Job xxxix. 27 and 29.*

The wisdom, forethought, and care manifested in the life of the Eagle are truly wonderful. It moves under the Divine power of intelligent instinct, and in obedience to this special law it lives, and moves, and builds, and flies, and glorifies its Maker. The Lord asked Job if it



was his power which gave feathers to the ostrich, wisdom to the hawk, or power to the Eagle. No, certainly not, no man can do that ; the power is Divine, and under this God-given light the Eagle builds its nest on the rock, cares for its young, seeks its prey, and answers the great purpose of its creation. At the same time it is one of God's living illustrations and preachers of higher things. Thank the Lord, for us there is more light, greater wisdom, and superior power. It is not the law of instinct we have to follow, but enlightened reason, grace, and heavenly wisdom. We have the Bible to light us to Jesus for salvation and safety, and it teaches us to build on the Rock for salvation (*Matt.* vii. 24), hide in the Rock for safety (*Ex.* xxxiii. 21), and sing in the Rock for joy (*Is.* xlii. 11). We have earthly teachers to point us to Jesus (*John* i. 29) and we have the Holy Spirit to lead us to Jesus (*John* xvi. 14 ; *John* vi. 37). But the question is, do we obey ? The secret of blessing is in obedience. If the obedience of the Eagle to its instinct makes it wise to build in safety, surely we should be obedient to the Word of God, the Light of God, and the Spirit of God, which will lead us to safety, happiness, and heaven. Let us say yes, and respond to all the calls of God.

**2. A Symbol of Renewed Youth.** *Ps.* ciii. 5.

“So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.”  
This is the Lord's vivid picture of renewed life,



vigour, and strength. It is the crowning blessing in the interesting list of mercies, referred to by David in this 103rd Psalm, *Forgiven, Healed, Redeemed, Crowned, Satisfied, and Renewed*. What a fulness of grace? enough to make every saved man shout, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for this is the secret of perpetual youth. "Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." The allusion is to the moulting of the eagle, which they say makes it again in appearance young, fresh, and vigorous. So the renewing power of God's grace can keep us always young. Everything about youth is a charm, its innocence, its joy, its love, its strength, and its hope, are most attractive and interesting. And the soul under the influence of God's grace is filled with all these blessings, and made like the eagle, full of active power to serve and glorify the Lord.

"Thy mouth with blessings ever new  
Whose gracious hand doth satisfy ;  
Thy youth with strength who doth endue,  
Yea, with eagle's strength supply."

### 3. A Sign of Increasing Strength. *Is. xl. 31.*

"They shall mount up with wings as eagles;" a bold figure of upward flight and progress, as a result of patient waiting upon the Lord. The eagle is remarkable for its strength and power of wing. He can soar beyond the limits of vision, and from that sublime height he looks down upon the world with calmness. The storms may rage, the earth may quake, nation may fight against



nation, but they affect him not. On the wings of faith even more mighty shall the child of God soar above the earth, the raging of Satan, the bitterness of the wicked. The trials of his experience cannot overwhelm him; he will fly towards the light and love of God, and mount up into the region of hope and happiness. His strength shall be increased, his faith shall be strong, and his progress shall be sure. There are three special marks of this spiritual progress: earnest prayer, soaring faith, and a holy walk. They go from strength to strength (*Ps. lxxxiv. 7*), from grace to grace (*John i. 16*), and from glory to glory (*2 Cor. iii. 18*). Are we like the Eagle soaring up to the light of God?

**4. A Simile of Tender Care.** *Ex. xix. 4; Deut. xxxii. 11.*

"I bear you on eagle's wings." "As an eagle stirreth up her nest," etc. In these two passages we have a wonderful image of redeeming love and tender care, both saving and instructing grace. The Eagle with much affection protects its young from danger and teaches them to fly and soar away to the sun. So the Lord delivered, protected, instructed, and guided Israel, in His Fatherly love and tenderness right away from Egypt to Canaan. And so He is loving, and saving and guiding His people now through this wilderness world to the haven of rest and joy. And in all their varied experiences there is the

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constant manifestation of the Lord's loving care. "God is Love" is written across every event in their lives, and the simile of the Eagle's tender care is as a window of light revealing the Lord's manifold grace. How full of Love these verses are. We have:—

**His saving love.** "And brought you unto Myself." *Ex.* xix. 4.

**His supporting love.** "I bear you on eagle's wings." *Ex.* xix. 4.

**His instructing love.** "As an eagle stirreth up her nest," etc. *Deut.* xxxii. 11.

**His protecting love.** "Spreadeth abroad her wings." *Deut.* xxxii. 11.

**His carrying love.** "Beareth them on her wings." *Deut.* xxxii. 11.

Similes of the Lord's love, power, and mercy, all in constant exercise for the safety, comfort, and joy of His people. And the abiding promise is available for all His elect children, "As birds flying, so will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also He will deliver it; and passing over He will preserve it" (*Is.* xxxi. 5). Are we in this happy place of love and divine protection? If not, why not?

**5. A Signal of Coming Woe.** *Matt.* xxiv. 28.

"For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." The Holy God, who is the righteous governor of the world, will



*The Eagle: A Sermon on Obedience.* 179

punish sin and overthrow every power of evil, and all who have abused His goodness and love will perish. The forces of evil will gather to crush His people and defy the Lord, but *there* also will the eagles of judgment gather and destroy the enemies of the Lord. The Lord Himself is coming in power and great glory to rule in righteousness and peace, and He will separate the tares from the wheat, and gather His elect from the four winds of heaven. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun." "Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh."





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